



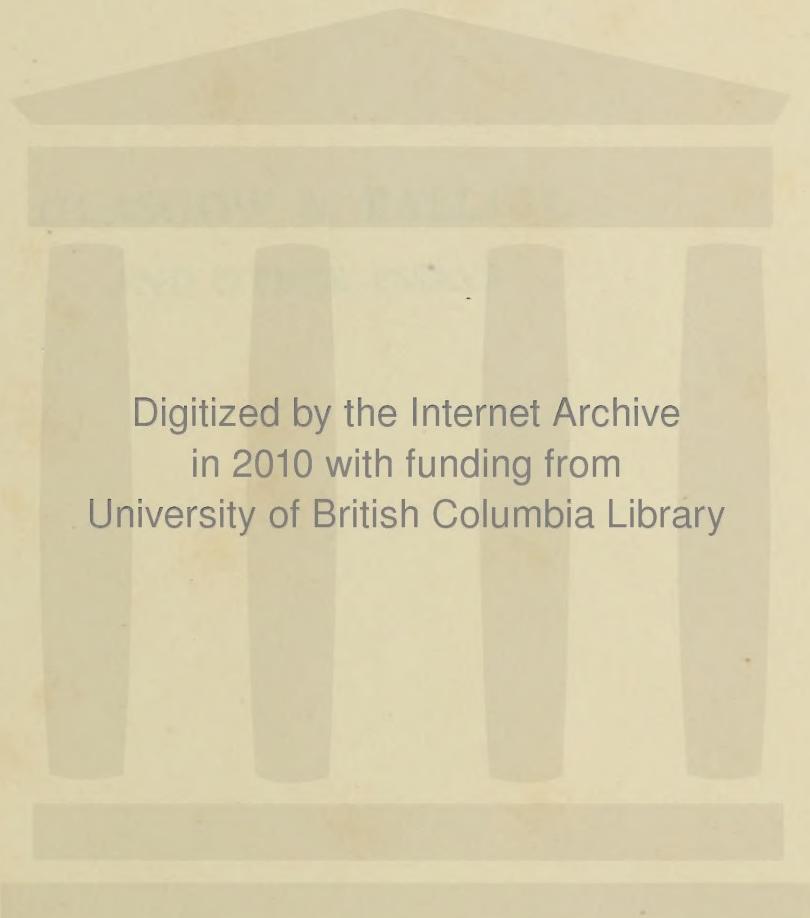
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# GLASGOW & BALLIOL

## AND OTHER ESSAYS

*By*

REV. P. A. WRIGHT-HENDERSON, D.D.

*Warden of Wadham College*

*1903-1913*

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## P R E F A C E

THESE essays are reprinted at the special request of a number of old contemporaries and pupils; they will serve to keep alive the memory of one of the best of talkers and wisest of counsellors in Victorian Oxford.

But they will, it is hoped, appeal to a wider circle, who never knew the Warden of Wadham. They are selected from a considerable number of contributions to *Blackwood's Magazine*, as describing with full sympathy and with graphic touches the life of old Glasgow and old Oxford, which has passed away, and some of the features of its passing. It is believed that they contain material, not accessible easily elsewhere, if indeed accessible at all, which the future historian of University Life will value.

Especial thanks must be given to Messrs. Blackwood & Sons for their courtesy in allowing these essays to be reprinted from their famous Magazine.

## DR. WRIGHT-HENDERSON

(From *The Oxford Magazine*, Jan. 26, 1922,  
with additions)

PATRICK ARKLEY HENDERSON was born on June 18, 1841, and it was not until 1886 that, on the death of his uncle, he took the name of Wright-Henderson. He came of an old Stirlingshire family, and his father was a clergyman of the Scottish Episcopal Church. At Glenalmond, where he went to school, he was a pupil of the Rev. Charles Wordsworth, afterwards Bishop of St. Andrews, and he formed a lifelong friendship with Dr. Bright, afterwards Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Oxford, who was then one of the masters. After the death of his two brothers in the massacre of Cawnpore, Henderson proceeded to Glasgow, where he was a pupil of Professors Lushington and Ramsay; of his teachers there he gave a charming sketch in an article in *Blackwood* (March 1894), called 'Glasgow and Balliol', which ranks high among the academic reminiscences of the last generation.

In 1861 he went up as a Snell Exhibitioner to Balliol, where he was a contemporary of Strachan-Davidson, Lord Lansdowne, Lord Loreburn, Sir William Anson, Andrew Lang, and others who

made the early sixties perhaps the most distinguished period in the history of that great College.

He took his First Class in ‘Greats’ in the summer of 1865, having with him in the same Class the late Professor William Sanday and Dr. Talbot (late Bishop of Winchester); then, in June 1867, he was elected Fellow of Wadham, being the first Fellow elected from outside the College under the new Statutes of the 1855 Commission. He himself used always to say that he owed his Fellowship to the fact that the examination clashed with the University Cricket Match, in which ‘Bob’ Reid (afterwards Lord Loreburn) decided to play, preferring athletic honours to academic.

From that time onwards, he constantly resided in Oxford, and his life was identified with his College. He was one of the first married tutors in Oxford, and many generations of old Wadham men have memories of the kindly hospitality of his house; while, after he became Sub-Warden in 1881, it would not be an exaggeration to say that he ran the College. It is no secret that the discipline of Wadham, when he took it over, left much to be desired; the memories of the great row of 1879 were still fresh, and the College was much below strength—only about fifty in number. Henderson had the essential points of a good

disciplinarian ; he knew when to shut his eyes and not to see small breaches of rules ; he remembered that he himself had been young, and that young men may do many foolish things without being bad ; and at the same time he knew quite well when to put his foot down, and when he had once done this, he kept it down. He created quite a sensation in the University by ‘gating’ C. B. Fry, the most prominent undergraduate of his time, and so preventing him from representing the University in London ; but Fry was wiser than his friends outside, and took his penalty, which he had thoroughly deserved, in the true Oxford spirit, without grumbling. Henderson was a good disciplinarian because he knew men personally, and many old pupils will remember the wisdom of his advice and help. As College chaplain, he was old-fashioned in his ways, and there were no sermons in Wadham Chapel in his time ; but he was a real religious influence in the lives of some of his pupils.

His work was especially important after 1895, when the health of his predecessor as Warden broke down. He himself was elected Warden in April 1903, on Mr. Thorley’s resignation, after which he proceeded to his D.D. He himself resigned the Wardenship at the end of 1913, when he found (after a serious illness) that his powers

were failing. After his resignation, he retired to the hills on the south of Oxford, but continued, while his health permitted, to take a keen interest in his old College. He died on January 7, 1922, after a long illness.

Dr. Wright-Henderson took for some time a considerable part in University politics and business. He was a successful Proctor in 1876, along with the present Provost of Queen's; he was made a Curator of the Sheldonian Theatre in 1904, was a Select Preacher 1906-7, and a Vice-Chancellor 1910-13. On more than one occasion he was run for 'Council' by the Liberal Party, but he was never elected. As a tutor, he urged continually the abolition of the 'Smalls' grammar paper, a reform which he never succeeded in carrying, though it has been brought about since his time. On this subject, his article in *Blackwood*, 'Grammar to the Wolves', attracted considerable attention; but his contributions to that Magazine, unfortunately much too few, were mainly reminiscences. Few had a happier touch in recording the stories of an Oxford which has now completely passed away; but he never carried out his intention of writing a book on the subject. One of his articles was expanded by him into a small volume—that on the life of John Wilkins, the founder of the Royal Society, his most dis-

tinguished predecessor at Wadham. He also edited in 1905 some unpublished letters of Sir Walter Scott.

No account of Dr. Wright-Henderson would be complete without some reference to his interest in sport of all kinds. He was a keen fisherman, and had, as an undergraduate, played in the Balliol Eleven when it contained several 'Blues', among them the late President of Corpus Christi College (Mr. Thomas Case). His increasing lameness compelled him soon to drop this; but he was one of the founders of the Oxford Golf Club, and remained a keen golfer for many years. And he rarely missed the Cricket Match at Lords.

He will be long remembered by those who knew him for his kindly conversation, his pleasant Scotch humour, and his keen personal interest in his many friends, young and old. By his marriage with Miss Annie Wood, daughter of Major Gray of Carse Gray, Forfarshire, he had one son and three daughters, who survive him.

J. W.

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Other Essays appearing in *Blackwood*:

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- A Troll in Norway (November 1898).
- The Story of Cawnpore (May 1904).
- An Oxford Trimmer (February 1906).
- Grammar to the Wolves (May 1906).



## GLASGOW AND BALLIOL

**G**LASGOW and Oxford! At first sight a strange contrast: the city of ‘lums’ and smoke; the city of spires and colleges—not indeed ‘half as old as time’, yet crumbled for the most part into a venerable decay, which makes them appear to the uneducated eye as old as York Minster or the Tower of London: on the one hand, a great modern city battling, and that successfully, with its troubles of poverty and ignorance, disease and dirt; tapping Loch Katrine for water worthy to be mixed with its own Falernian; annexing mile after mile of the surrounding country, and destined perhaps in a few decades hence to approach within measurable distance of Loch Lomond: on the other hand, a country town not larger than a Glasgow suburb—a Sleepy Hollow—‘the home of lost causes and forsaken beliefs, and unpopular names and impossible loyalties.’

Alas!—if we ought to say alas!—we have changed all that now. Glasgow is what it was fifty years ago, only larger: the Oxford of 1893 is as different from the Oxford of 1843 as Chicago is different from Canterbury.

‘The forsaken beliefs’ which Matthew Arnold, prophesying unwisely, pronounced dead, are now alive again; the lost causes, all save that of the Stuarts, have found new champions not less able and ardent, perhaps wiser, than those whom Pusey and Keble led fifty years ago, for many things have happened since then. And new loyalties, new causes, destined perhaps in their turn to become impossible and lost in the judgement of the young thinker of next century, have found a place in Oxford common-rooms, and, what is more important, in the minds of Oxford undergraduates. Sleepy Hollow has awakened and become a Pantopolion—if you prefer it, a Pandemonium—of every kind of ‘movement’ and fanaticism known in this *fin de siècle*. The Positivist—though he is visibly shaky and tending to become impossible—the Agnostic, the Philanthropist, the Nonconformist, the Unitarian, the Advanced Thinker, live happily enough with the Tory and High Churchman, even with the Moderate Liberal, who, after many years of scorn and persecution from all parties, is now being tolerated, even respected.

Oxford is said, not without truth, to have become a London suburb; but it is a suburb with a character of its own, for the traditions of the place are strong, and every Oxford man is at heart

a Conservative. The Genius Loci is a powerful one, and his magic is the charm of old buildings and old gardens and old customs preserved with singular tenacity, and the indefinable influence of college life.

Between the town on the Isis and the town on the Clyde there is one resemblance—they both possess universities, and between the universities there is a bond which has survived and will survive Commissions and reforms. In 1677 John Snell founded for Glasgow students exhibitions tenable at Balliol: his foundation has brought to Oxford several hundreds of young Scotsmen. Even Dr. Johnson admitted that much may be made of a Scotsman if he be caught young: the Snell exhibitioners were caught young, and something—it does not become a Snell exhibitioner to say ‘much’—was made of them: to Balliol Glasgow has given some of its most distinguished students, and Balliol owes to Glasgow and to Scotland generally no inconsiderable part of its prosperity and fame. In the roll of the Snell exhibitioners are found the names of Adam Smith, Sir William Stirling Hamilton, John Gibson Lockhart, Archbishop Tait, Principal Shairp, Professor Edward Caird, the new Master of Balliol, Mr. Monro, the Homeric scholar, now Provost of Oriel, Mr. Lewis Campbell, Mr. Andrew Lang, and many

others who, though less distinguished, have done good work in Oxford and in the world.

The present writer, who had the great good fortune to be a Snell exhibitioner, and therefore both a Glasgow student and a Balliol man, wishes to put on record some reminiscences of Glasgow and Balliol as they were when he knew them more than thirty years ago. He will speak mainly of the teachers under whom he was placed, and he may perhaps stir the memories of others who, like him, look back with gratitude and affection to help and kindness impossible to forget. He will speak only of the dead, for it is not becoming to praise the living, of whom only two, Archdeacon Palmer and Mr. W. L. Newman, remain—so nearly ‘all, all are gone, the old familiar faces’. Even the buildings are changed : those of Glasgow, site and all, completely ; those of Balliol partially. The writer can remember the old buildings of both. The Glasgow student of to-day walks every morning through pleasant places to a noble building set on a hill, commodious, with large and airy class-rooms. We, the students of more than thirty years ago, went through dingy and dirty streets on the dark November mornings to a building, picturesque indeed and glorified by its associations, but not commodious nor well lighted—set not on a hill but in the old High Street of Glasgow,

near the unspeakable Vennel, amid sights and sounds and smells like those of the Seven Dials. The class-rooms were large enough, but often close and stifling, and it needed much enthusiasm for learning to keep us from slumbering, even when Lushington expounded Aeschylus or William Ramsay declaimed his vigorous translation of Juvenal. It was a strange sight that of the benches filled with every sort and condition, almost every age, of men—‘*Rusticus urbano confusus, turpis honesto.*’ There sat the emancipated schoolboy of fifteen or sixteen; the clerk from the office or counting-house, who, in the hour which his employer did not grudge, sought to give himself that ‘mouthful of learning’ which, according to Dr. Johnson, is all that a Scotsman ever receives; the youth from the Highlands, who had tended sheep or worked in the fields all summer, that he might save enough to pay for a garret in Glasgow and a barrel of herrings or oatmeal, and live with a patient heroism often unrewarded, in some unsavoury ‘close’ far away from the fresh breezes of South Uist or Loch Assynt: alone as only a shy and awkward rustic in a strange city can be alone. Here and there a grizzled veteran of forty, whose object and destiny were a puzzle to his younger fellow-classmen: perhaps he aspired to become master of his village school, perhaps to occupy the

manse, perhaps simply to improve his mind and learn though late. There was something ludicrous and half pathetic in his isolation and gravity, if not gloom, among the turbulent youngsters not half his age. For the youngsters were turbulent, and needed a sharp eye and firm hand: where these were wanting there was anarchy and unseemly conduct, scraping with the feet, bear-fighting, heavy falls of students shot from their seats by sudden impulses, invisible, impossible to resist. To a northern professor are necessary some of the gifts of a commander of men—even of a drill-sergeant: without these, consummate scholarship, geniality, enthusiasm are of no avail, though joined with firmness they charm and tame the wildest Scotsman.

Life in a Glasgow class-room was not dull nor apathetic, and the custom of awarding the medals and other prizes by the votes of the students caused every member of the class to take a lively interest either as combatant or spectator in the rivalry of the most distinguished students: the professor, himself sharing, no doubt, the delight with which all Englishmen—alas! how living in the south saps patriotism—I meant to say all Britishers, including the Irish—watch a keen contest, athletic or intellectual, would call up for translation, as the session drew near its close, most

frequently the men known to be in the running, and a happy rendering or apt quotation would be followed by applause always enthusiastic, often discriminating, while failure would be read in the blank looks of disappointed partisans. The standard of pure scholarship was not high, for few of the students had written an iambic or hexameter or heard much of the particle *άν* before they came to college; but the indomitable energy of a young Scotsman wishing to get on, or to learn for learning's sake, produced many good scholars, in the sense of men who had read much Greek and Latin. In the contest for the Blackstone medal the candidates were led to read more widely than the best of English public school boys—I might say than the best of Oxford undergraduates, except Hertford or Ireland scholars. The prize was for him who should offer the largest amount of Greek or Latin authors, and give at sight the best *viva voce* translation of passages from them selected by the professor. The Blackstone was a quaint and interesting function: a long low room, filled at one end with a crowd of keen spectators; at the other sat a circle of professors, and in their midst a white-faced youth in a large arm-chair, the seat of which, strangely hard and uncomfortable, was the Black stone—a stone said to have been used at the coronations of the Scottish

kings. Coronation was probably a gloomy ceremony to a Scottish king in the presence of the Douglases, Black or Red : he must have thought of wars and imprisonments and murders to be inflicted on or suffered from his fierce lords ; but his anxieties were as nothing compared with the anxieties of a youth more ambitious than diligent, who had offered most of Greek literature, from Homer to Thucydides, or the Latin poets, imperfectly read, and was now to translate from them passages selected by the professor with baffling ingenuity, passages associated in after-life with horrors quite indescribable. The performance was often poor ; the training was admirable, and it might be recommended to the masters of English public schools who seem to think that a language can be acquired by a study of its grammar and anomalies without any large reading of its authors. But such reflections, if pursued, would lead us far away from Glasgow or Balliol.

The corporate life of the students was not then as vigorous as it is now. It was galvanized from time to time by the rectorial elections, which were full of amusing incidents, and brought the young Tories and Liberals into pleasant and wholesome intercourse with each other and with their adversaries.

The rectorial elections have been ridiculed as

boyish frolics, but they were to many the beginnings of a political education. The boys may have had or have no very distinct conceptions of the issues raised by a Reform Bill, or a bill for the better government of Ireland, but the possession of clear ideas in politics is not a necessary qualification for a British or Irish parliamentary elector ; and among the students there were at any rate no 'illiterates'. The addresses of some lord rectors have been valuable in many ways, and not least as a proof that British statesmen are still for the most part cultivated men.

Literary and philosophical societies among the Glasgow students of those days were few and not widely known. Athletic clubs were almost non-existent. A few cricketers organized with some success in 1861 a cricket club, of which the writer has pleasant recollections. Football was played spasmodically in the College Green, where 150 years before Frank Osbaldistone crossed swords with Rashleigh.

It was undoubtedly a deficiency in the student life of thirty-five years ago that there was in it little 'solidarity', and few opportunities for the men to meet except in the class-rooms. A glance at the University Calendar will show that in this respect there is a large improvement. But friendships were formed then, as no doubt they are now,

of that closeness and durability which belong only to the friendships of youth.

In our time we learnt Greek from Lushington, Latin from William Ramsay, logic from Buchanan, and moral philosophy from Fleming. These professors only are mentioned, for only at their feet the writer sat, and he was transferred to Balliol ignorant of mathematics, natural science, theology, medicine, and law—a ‘ copious negative catalogue ’, like that of the provisions at Johnson’s Highland inn.

Professor Lushington—one can see his handsome face, as Wandering Willie saw the face of Claverhouse (though it is to be hoped in better company)—‘ beautiful as when he lived ’: delicate, refined, closely resembling that of Tennyson, his brother-in-law; one can see him as he sat before us in the dark mornings or darker afternoons, courteous and patient of mistakes which must have caused him great pain; overawing the most thoughtless and disorderly barbarian by his quiet dignity; wasting often on his audience the pearls of his great learning, for he was saturated with Greek; too fine an instrument for much of the work he had to do, but doing it, even to catechizing in Greek accidence, with scrupulous conscientiousness. Professor Lewis Campbell, in the interesting account of the professor and his

work which appeared in a late number of the *Classical Review*, has well described his manner of lecturing to his private class, where he addressed his best students, and gave them of his best: the writer well remembers the lecture on the *Agamemnon*, and possesses notes of it, imperfect and inaccurate no doubt, but sufficient to recall the thoroughness and depth of Lushington's treatment of the difficulties of that fine play—a thoroughness which set before us the ideal of the patience and insight which make a great scholar. He used to read to the class the Greek iambics or hexameters produced by the best of his pupils, compositions not unfrequently disfigured by 'howlers'—to use the technical name—which he condemned by no stronger term than 'inadmissible', an epithet which seemed sarcastic when applied to a false concord or something worse. Professor Campbell has recorded 'that peculiarity of utterance which made the words seem to come from him reluctantly', and he adds that this apparent hesitation made his utterances more significant. The professor was chary both of praise and blame, and his words were the more weighty. He was, in manner at least, reserved and  $\sigma\epsilon\mu\nu\acute{o}s$ : but there was about him a 'distinction' which impressed both those who in a measure appreciated his great gifts, and those who only saw in

him, as they would have expressed it, if they could have anticipated the modern phrase, a very ' grand old man ', who, they believed, thought and habitually spoke in Greek.

Of Professor William Ramsay the writer is incapable of expressing an unbiased judgement, for he received from him much kindness as well as ' humanity ' of another sort. He was, till you had gained his friendship, no difficult task for any one who showed that he was ready to work and valued help, somewhat reserved and brusque, short, and sharp in manner—one who did not ' suffer fools gladly ' ; but he was patient with blundering stupidity and ignorance, if they were redeemed by diligence and honest effort. He was said to have taken great pains with a Highlander, who, destitute of the rudiments of Latin, but determined to make himself a scholar, professed himself ready—and he would have done it—to learn the Latin dictionary by heart: the story is ethically true both of the professor and of many of his students. At the beginning of the session, when the first week determines whether the professor or the students are to have the upper hand in the class-room, Ramsay's action was quick and decisive: he would direct his blue-grey eyes, which at such times wore a singularly unpleasant expression, to some bench from which signs of

incipient disorder came ; select from among its occupants the right man, bid him stand up, and ask him his name, and then with a few stinging words and a dark allusion to the *Senatus Academicus*—an indistinct and formidable body, the *Vehmgericht* of the University—would make the young rebel blush and pale alternately, and sit down resolved not to ‘try it on again’ with Ramsay. Young men like a strong hand, if its visitations be not capricious nor unjust, and Ramsay’s popularity did not suffer because he was severe.

It was in his private class that, like Lushington, he poured out the treasures of his learning. He was not an elegant scholar, who could turn ‘Wait till the clouds roll by’ or ‘Ta-ra-ra boom de aye’ into pretty verse, nor was he great in philology ; but he was a learned man who had read widely. His lectures on Juvenal he adorned with a wealth of quotation and illustrative passages which would have delighted Professor Mayor, whose commentary on Juvenal much resembles Ramsay’s lectures. But he was at his best when he declaimed—in the old sense of the word—his spirited translation of Juvenal, warming as he spoke, feeling and making his hearers feel both the pathos and the fierce indignation of that prince of satirists and rhetoricians. Specially excellent was his translation of that passage in the tenth

satire which describes the miseries of old age. He was, when the writer heard him, in failing health, and there was something touching in the brave old man's unflinching rendering of those gruesome lines. At San Remo he found the rest and quiet and gentle air he needed, and died there some twenty-five years before his closest friend Professor Lushington, like him far away from the 'gloom of old St. Mungo's'.

Professor Buchanan, 'Logic Bob', as he was irreverently and affectionately called, was of a different type, shy and retiring, *εὐκολος*, like Sophocles. His fine and massive head, set on an insignificant body, gave him a strange and interesting appearance as he sat in his professorial chair, with little more than his face visible, expounding scholastic logic. He did not hold with Mill, and indeed belonged to the pre-Millian age; nor could it with truth be said that his teaching, save some very lucid lectures on elementary psychology, went much beyond 'Barbara Celarent'. But he rightly valued 'Barbara Celarent' and the drill of deductive logic as an instrument of education—his paternal and genial manner, his patience and ready appreciation of diligence or ability, robbed logic of half its terrors. His method of teaching was of the Socratic kind, by question and answer, after half an hour given to a careful and

intelligible exposition of some portion of his subject, worthy of a philosophical descendant of Hutcheson and Reid. Like his colleague, Dr. Fleming, he belonged to that common-sense school whose teaching suits or once suited the common sense of Scotsmen. And here the writer cannot deny himself the luxury of a digression, nor refrain from expressing his wonder that a young Englishman in the best of public schools is at nineteen ignorant of the rudiments of logic ; his faculties of reasoning or abstract thinking, unless he be a mathematician, absolutely untrained, and atrophied as completely as Darwin tells us were atrophied by disuse his faculties of the aesthetic kind. At seventeen or eighteen a Scottish student, though deficient in Latin prose, has been taught to exercise more than his memory or imitative powers : he knows something, and even a little may count for much in the way of education, of those mysteries of thought and its laws which at first disgust and appal an Oxford undergraduate two years his elder, and in no way his intellectual inferior. It is in a logic or philosophy class-room that a Scottish student is seen at his best. There he is not hampered by imperfect grammatical training ; he can bring his strong and perfervid intellect to bear on questions which interest him more than Aeschylus or Virgil, masters

who demand a long apprenticeship. The writer can remember answers given in the logic class at least as good as those given in the Balliol lecture-room by the best Balliol men to Jowett's most subtle and startling problems in political economy.

The turn of Scotsmen for metaphysics is due to their education rather than to their intellectual character, which is more of a practical than a speculative kind—for Sydney Smith did not speak truly when he said that even Scottish young ladies can think and talk of love only in the 'abstract'.

Of Professor Fleming, who taught moral philosophy, the writer had, owing to his own fault, less knowledge than he had of the professors whom he has mentioned. He says 'his own fault', for Fleming's lectures were orderly and clear, and irregular attendance at them brought its own penalty. They would not perhaps satisfy the student of the present day, who demands psychological analysis and a treatment of the bearing of evolution on morals, such as that given by Professor Edward Caird or the late Professor Green; but they were lucid statements of the systems of the leading British moralists, and a student heard, or ought to have heard, what great thinkers had thought on necessity and free will, on right and wrong, and he acquired something of that knowledge of the reasoned opinions of different schools

which is often lacking in the young philosopher. The writer gratefully remembers the coals of fire heaped by Dr. Fleming on his head when at the end of his last session he said good-bye to the professor, and the kindly sarcasm of the old man's hope that the moral philosophy taught at Oxford would prove more attractive than the moral philosophy of Glasgow. In outward aspect Dr. Fleming somewhat resembled Dr. Johnson, but the valedic-tions of the latter would have been very different.

Of Principal Barclay, of Professor Blackburn (who taught mathematics), of Sir William Thomson (now Lord Kelvin), and of other professors who then adorned the University, the writer knew nothing except by report, for his stay at Glasgow was too brief and his range too limited to permit him to drink at all the fountains of knowledge offered to its students by that great University. For loyalty to Oxford need not prevent any of her sons who have the great advantage of being Scots-men from confessing the secret conviction of all born north of the Tweed that Scottish things are best—at least as good as possible—and the Scot-  
ish Universities are among the greatest and most characteristic of Scottish things. They are schools not merely of learning but of moral discipline. Many a Scottish student has been and will be a hero, for it is not too much to call by the name

of heroism the self-denying life of a poor student who ‘tenui musam meditatur avena’, to quote yet once again Sydney Smith’s suggested motto for the *Edinburgh Review*.

At Oxford or Cambridge a shepherd from Salisbury Plain, if there be shepherds there, could not imitate his Scottish brother, for a poor man would find it hard to live happily in an English University on herrings and oatmeal.

But comparisons are odious. Both English and Scottish Universities have a character and work and excellences of their own—a character which each would do well to preserve. They have both for the present been reformed enough. The British Constitution is fair game for the experimental politician; but the Universities had better be let alone for a century or two, at the end of which time they will have produced a fresh crop of abuses, and the reformer may go to work again, with something for him to do. The British Universities may not yet be perfect, but perfection is best achieved from within, and within the Universities there is plenty of enthusiasm for improvement—enthusiasm of a more intelligent and instructed kind than is likely to be found in the House of Commons, and not to the same degree, if at all, affected by consideration of party needs.

And now we go to Balliol.

*Balliol in the Early Sixties*

THE transformation of a Glasgow student into a Balliol undergraduate is a change which may be compared in some respects with that of a chrysalis into a butterfly: in some respects only, for it is not a passing from a lower into a higher life—no loyal son of Glasgow would feel or admit it to be that—but rather a Pythagorean transmigration of the soul, which may be in the way either of an ascent or of a descent.

Whatever the nature of the change may be, it is like that from the chrysalis into the butterfly in that it is startling and complete; and as the butterfly probably feels tremors of pleasure, mingled with a certain shyness and timidity, as it wings its first flight into the fields and sunshine, so the Snell exhibitioner finds when he comes to Oxford all things new and strange. He passes from freedom into discipline, no doubt beneficial, but sometimes irksome to his Scottish independence or perversity. A college dean, a university proctor, seem anachronisms, at least for him, though he is disarmed, should he come into collision with them, by their extreme though sometimes suspicious politeness.

He is often a little older than the freshmen of his year, and is impressed by their extreme freshness—

for his own youthful illusions, he thinks, are past, and he believes himself to know something of the world. But if he can adapt himself to their ways, he finds in the boys fresh from an English public school a careless, happy frankness and geniality, which awaken in him the suspicion that the typical Scottish character, admirable though it be, and capable, when thawed, of friendship and affection as strong as any found south of the Tweed, might be improved by a touch of frivolity, extravagance, effusiveness, and many other smaller vices.

He contrasts the boisterous life of a Glasgow class-room with the decorum and dignity, approaching dullness, of an Oxford college lecture, where applause manifested by ‘ruffing’ with the feet or crying ‘Euge! bene!’ would, he instinctively feels, create much consternation, followed by inextinguishable laughter. He is struck by that most radical of all differences between Englishmen and Scotsmen—the difference in their management of money. Where a young Scotsman spends a shilling, and with effort, a young Englishman, without an effort, spends half a crown, and that whether he has it or not: for the new-comer soon finds that there are poor men in Oxford as well as in Glasgow, and that the comparatively luxurious standard of college life is one set by the richer undergraduates—one to

which the poorer must conform; and they conform willingly enough, taking no thought for the morrow—that precept which Englishmen find the easiest and Scotsmen find the hardest of the precepts in the Sermon on the Mount.

But the writer would be misunderstood if he were thought to ignore the fact that even thirty years ago the extravagance of Oxford life had much diminished, and is now, except in isolated cases, a thing of the past; for undergraduates have learnt in these bad times to look at both sides of a shilling: it has been well said that the undergraduate of to-day is extravagant in nothing except in his opinions.

He was a fortunate man who entered Balliol thirty years ago—fortunate, too, are those who entered it, or will enter it, long before and long after the early sixties: but to every one his own college days seem best.

Balliol is as great a college as it was: if it is less pre-eminent than it was in the Schools, that is because other colleges have in this respect become better than they were, not because Balliol has become worse—and doubtless happy days are spent there now, and lasting friendships formed, as in times gone by. In 1861 the college was half its present size, for the changes had not then been made which removed the necessity of residence

for three years within the college walls, and rendered it possible for an efficient and popular college to double its numbers at will.

In those days life in Balliol was probably less ‘intense’ and full than it is now. Debating societies were unknown—East London we had never heard of. Our music was of the simple and austere kind commended by Plato, expressive of energy and violent action, not of the artificial and varied sort which may now be heard in Balliol Hall on Sunday evenings. We had no Home Rulers among us—we defied no laws, and none of us had come in collision with any ‘myrmidons of tyranny’ except the proctor. We were deplorably deficient in taste, and knew nothing of aesthetics—no ladies came to tea with us in the afternoons and pretended to admire our furniture.

But we did our best for the college: our boat was high on the river. One of our men had to go to Cambridge to teach Cambridge men to row. Our college Eleven was the best in the university, and a Balliol captain, aided by Balliol men, helped to beat Cambridge at Lords three years running, and organized victory after years of disaster. We got Hertford and Ireland scholarships and first-classes in abundance—and, best of all, we were a happy family: the lines which usually divide reading from non-reading men were faintly

marked ; both classes existed, for though all men were required to read for honours, yet some did not read very hard—nevertheless they played whist and billiards on equal terms with those who read. There was none of that suspicion and contempt, mingled with unreasoning admiration, with which the athlete and the future first-class man often regard each other, to the great loss of both. There were sets in Balliol, but sets not sharply divided, for in a small college there is more solidarity than in a college of 150 or 200 men, where many must be strangers to each other. But the writer must refrain from continuing a panegyric which might be burdensome, if not odious, to all but Balliol men of one generation, pleading as his excuse for what he has said the unquestioned duty of every Oxford man to think and speak of his own college as the best, and his own days as the most glorious in its history.

I wish to write only of our teachers. College dons, as a class, have few friends. Alongside of the individual 'don' there exists in the minds of many undergraduates and most of the writers for the press an auto-don, a real Platonic universal, an abstract entity, the personification of many odious qualities—pedantry, ignorance of the world, want of sympathy with all rational pursuits, positive malevolence towards the undergraduates. He is

the enemy of the human race and of joy, the principle of evil, the bane of the University, which without him would be a happy place. He has not been seen save by the eye of the mind, but he exists, and is more real than the don met with in the region of phenomena ; for on this point there are many Platonists.

A member of the unfortunate class of which this person is the type may be pardoned for offering an apology for his order, and he could offer no better defence than a few reminiscences of dons known to him as an undergraduate.

His task is a painful one, for of the men who governed Balliol thirty years ago only two are now alive ; but it is a task not wholly painful, for it is to make a sincere though feeble acknowledgement and record of great kindness and unflinching self-devotion, which found their reward not merely in success but in warm regard and gratitude.

Scott was then Master ; Jowett, Woolcombe, Palmer, and Riddell were tutors ; Wall, Henry Smith, and W. L. Newman were lecturers ; and Green was junior fellow, preparing himself for the distinguished part he was to play in the government and tuition of his college.

It has been the good fortune of Balliol to produce and keep for its own service many distinguished men : it has been Balliol's evil fortune to

lose by death many of them in the prime of life : Smith, Riddell, Green, and, in later days, Lewis Nettleship and Toynbee, died in one sense young, before their work was done.

Of the survivors, Archdeacon Palmer and W. L. Newman, the writer will say nothing ; but they will not, he hopes, think him impertinent in saying that they hold the same place in the memory of their pupils of these days as that held by their colleagues.

Dr. Scott was Master of Balliol from 1854 to 1870. Under him the college maintained its reputation and prosperity ; his position was perhaps a difficult one, for he was in imperfect sympathy with some who felt for him personally entire respect : but his tact and courtesy made rough places smooth, and his Mastership was a triumph of good sense and good feeling in the face of opposition or, at least, difference of opinion, sincere and conscientious, but none the less embarrassing.

The writer is aware that he is treading on dangerous ground, but he dares to do so, because he feels a strong desire—one shared by many of his time—that fuller justice should be done to the memory of a man who did the work which lay before him quietly and effectually, without putting himself *en évidence* ; whose fame has been eclipsed

by the more striking and self-assertive personalities of Dr. Jenkyns and Mr. Jowett.

He was the most accomplished scholar who ever held the Mastership : he helped along with Dean Liddell to produce the well-known dictionary, an aid to the study of Greek in England no less valuable than the translations of Greek authors made by his successor.

It is pleasing to Balliol men who believe in Greek (if not in Compulsory Pass Greek) to think that two Masters of their college have done so much for Hellenism.

Scott was a handsome man, with a clear-cut somewhat bird-like face, of quiet and kindly manners, under which lurked an irony which he seldom used. Of him, as of all college heads, many stories were told by undergraduates and others, true in spirit if not in fact—some of them probably not true even in spirit, for in encounters between a head and an undergraduate victory is not always to the younger man, who sometimes, it must be confessed, misunderstands courteous sarcasm.

But Balliol undergraduates appreciated the courtesy of Dr. Scott if not his sarcasm, and the memory of the kindly and dignified gentleman will long be cherished by many who wish that his name and work were better known.

Mr. Wall, professor of logic in the University, gave college lectures in logic, and was bursar. In both capacities he was short, clear, incisive. When receiving battels he gave no change, and he was believed to have amassed in this way for the college enormous wealth. His explanation of mysterious items in the battel-bills was conclusive, if not satisfactory. ‘Why, sir, the reason is the immemorial custom of the college.’ His logic lectures, not always appreciated as they deserved to be, for at that time Mill was predominant in the Oxford schools, were terse and clear, and enlivened by humorous illustrations, and questions suddenly addressed to the most inattentive or conceited in the lecture, exposing unknown depths of ignorance, to the comfort and delight of others no less ignorant than the victim. Wall was a strong Conservative, and found pleasure in puncturing Liberal windbags, of whom not a few, as well as windbags of the opposition persuasion, were to be found in those days, as perhaps they are to be found now, among clever Balliol men.

Woolcombe—or Woolks—for no Balliol tutor was ever called by his legal name, but by some other which may not always be revealed—was dean and senior tutor: he was a man of the kindest heart and entire simplicity of character.

He had enemies, mainly among those whose chapel attendance was irregular ; but he had also many friends, for he was transparently sincere and had strong convictions—convictions which carried him through the irksome task of exacting and reading ‘Catechetics’, by this time a survival, like the custom at Oriel, not always edifying, of requiring undergraduates to submit to the Provost an abstract of the University sermon. Catechetics were summaries of lectures delivered in college chapel on the doctrines of the Church of England. It is to be feared that the summaries sent in, though brief, contained many inaccurate, even heretical statements of doctrine, which must have been painful reading to a sound theologian.

Woolcombe went by the name of ‘Tay’, due to a slight stammer or impediment in utterance, which sometimes, when he was admonishing an offender and speaking earnestly, diminished the effect of his rebukes. Many Balliol men must remember that evening when the New Hall was opened, and the outburst of genuine applause which greeted Woolcombe’s name—applause renewed when Lord Bowen spoke of him as ‘the most courteous of Oxford tutors’.

In his latter days he resigned his tutorship, but lived in Balliol, devoting himself to the study of the New Testament ; troubled no more by Cate-

chetics or wayward undergraduates ; perfectly happy, as the writer has heard from one who knows, in the affectionate respect of those who differed from him on many subjects.

Riddell, the well-known Greek scholar, was the type of a Christian gentleman. That title is often falsely claimed or bestowed, often abused and misinterpreted, and to some persons it has become offensive ; but it is, after all, the name for a high ideal. The beauty and refinement of Riddell's character were seen in his delicate and attractive face. No one could resist the quiet charm of his gracious manner, half diffident at first sight, but on better knowledge found to be not shyness but the reserve and self-suppression of ' a beautiful soul '.

Shrewsbury has produced many fine Greek scholars, but none finer than ' Jimmy Riddell '—it is difficult to speak of him by any other name. His extreme fastidiousness, and his early death at forty-four, prevented him from writing much ; the fragments he has left show what he might have done. It was a pleasure to take composition to him, for a gentle sigh was his only comment on the most discreditable blunder ; and he would substitute for some clumsy phrase or line an emendation which, had psychical research been invented in those days, we should have thought

to be a communication from Sophocles. How vividly the writer can remember the games at rackets which he played with some of us ! In games character shows itself more plainly than in things thought serious, and Jimmy's craving for perfection and consideration for the feelings of others manifested themselves in his lamentations and anxious apologies for any bad stroke he made.

The name of Professor Henry Smith is known far beyond the limits of Oxford ; it might have been still more widely known had not weak health in youth—that bridle of Theages—kept him back from going to the Bar or entering Parliament, in either of which spheres the highest honours would have been within the reach of that most brilliant man. But his career in Oxford was as useful and honourable as that of a Lord Chancellor or Cabinet Minister. He gave to the service and great advantage of his University the remarkable gifts which would have made him famous in a larger arena. Those gifts were various : a penetrating intellect, great wit, which never made an enemy, an eloquent and persuasive tongue, and that which makes such endowments irresistible, a charming manner, added to knowledge of the world, and the faculty of being all things to all men.

Stories used to be current about the young Irishman, whose delicate health forbade him to

reside in Oxford, and who appeared there at intervals for a week or two to carry off the Ireland or the Mathematical Scholarship, the two highest distinctions in the University. He was an admirable scholar, and a profound mathematician. Some of his friends regretted that he did not concentrate himself and produce some *magnum opus*; but each man knows best how to live his own life. Distinction perhaps came to him so easily that he was indifferent to it, and preferred to be Henry Smith, the only person or thing, as a Cambridge man once said, in whom or in which all Oxford men believed.

He took a certain share in the tuition of the College, not disdaining to look over the Latin prose of candidates for Responsions, unofficially called 'Smalls'. One of those candidates remembers the genial sarcasm with which he criticized a piece of Latin prose containing a blunder, or slip of the pen, of a terrible nature, and his searching inquiries into the peculiarities of Latin usage north of the Tweed; for he would joke with everybody and about everything, and yet was always *εὐτράπελος* and *ἐπιδέξιος*, words impossible to translate, and fully intelligible only to those who have heard Henry Smith talk his best. His death 'eclipsed the gaiety' of colleges. Alas! that the stories told of him and by him seem likely

to share the fate of Oxford stories, and be lost or spoilt. Alas ! still more, that his flowing beard and flying gown will be seen no more, for his place cannot be filled.

Green presented a striking contrast to his colleague. Green's influence on Oxford was more profound than that of Smith, and of a different kind. His dark and serious face expressed the earnestness, the almost sombreness, of his character. He was not gloomy nor pessimistic, but he seemed to dwell much on the evil in the world and in his own country, and on the obligation incumbent on him and all men to do something to mitigate inequality and misery and vice.

He was the main agent in the philosophical reaction from the teaching of Mill to that of Kant and Hegel, which has been as remarkable a phenomenon in Oxford and in English thought during the last quarter of a century as the Tractarianism which preceded it, and was in some degree akin to it, for between the two movements there was an essential resemblance, in that both emphasized the ' spiritual principle ' and the mystery of things. Whatever may be the fate of Green's philosophy —whether it is to hold its own or to give place in turn to some new system—the indirect effect of his teaching will be permanent. That teaching was obscure, especially in his early days ; but as

he grew older it seemed to become clarified, and had he not died at forty-five he would probably have worked out his thoughts and presented them to the world, so shaped as to demand less effort to understand them than his published writings do, though they are intelligible to those who will take pains.

His first pupils found that in conversation he did not bewilder them, as he sometimes bewildered them in his lectures. Nothing gave him greater pleasure than to be asked those awkward questions which children in philosophy, like other children, often ask. Never perhaps was he seen to laugh more delightedly—for he could laugh at the right time—than when it occurred to a pupil leaving the room with his hand on the half-opened door to put the trifling question, ‘What, then, is the origin of our ideas?’

He will be familiar to many as Mr. Gray in *Robert Elsmere*, a portrait like him yet not like him, for he was difficult to paint.

His interests were not merely philosophical : he sat both in the University Council and in the town council, and showed a strong and active interest in social and political questions, especially in education, proving his earnestness by the labour and money which he spent in helping to establish a good high school in Oxford. At his funeral was

present a vast gathering, not merely of members of the University but of the citizens of Oxford, whose welfare he had at heart.

Of the late Master of Balliol much has been written in the last few months—so much, indeed, that his name is in danger of becoming burdensome to the ear, like the name of Aristides. He himself would have disapproved of some of the utterances of his friends, for he disliked extravagance and disproportion. It would ill become one who received much kindness from the late Master to constitute himself an *advocatus Diaboli*. But to be accused of perfection is a hard fate for any man, and his friends are bound to clear him of the charge, and to be truthful, like himself, at the risk of appearing to be ungracious and ungrateful.

Jowett attracted most men, but he repelled some, for, in his earlier days at least, he was not very tolerant of certain differences in opinion and sentiment. His sympathies were limited, and towards those who were outside them his manner was abrupt and harsh. He offended some by his admiration for success and for the ‘saviours of society’. He was fond of great people, not owing to a vulgar worship of rank and station, but because he desired to influence those who had or were to have power in English society or politics,

for love of influence was his ruling passion. He was inflexible, and, in the opinion of some, rough and ready in his choice of means for the attainment of his ends. But in a strong man these faults are the 'defects of his qualities', and some of them are intensified by hostility and obloquy. To recount his virtues is more pleasing and more truthful in effect, if it be wished to have an impression of the man as he was.

If he admired success and sought to gain young men who had the ability or rank or gifts of any kind which would bring power or distinction in after-life, he did many acts of kindness to others who were not likely to become eminent or influential, and who could give him no return except gratitude and affection.

He would occasionally make an undergraduate come and live with him and share his rooms, bivouacking in his bath-room, it was said, that he might tame and humanize the poor and unattractive 'smug', to use that expressive and uncharitable name.

In one case, when such a one had requited kindness with ingratitude and failure, and under the pressure of desperate poverty and debt had committed a miserable theft, the Master gave bail for him, and the unhappy youth was seen no more. The bail was forfeited, and it was darkly

rumoured that the Master had corrupted high officials and had assisted the criminal to abscond. The suspicion did the Master no harm in the minds of the very few who heard of the occurrence.

He was kind, too, in another way, understood not always during the bad quarter of an hour in which the benefit was being conferred, but appreciated with increasing clearness in after-days. He watched narrowly the character and conduct of his pupils, and at the critical time of their career, if there was reason to fear that they were going wrong in any way, morally or intellectually, he would administer plain sharp reproof, which saved many from discredit and disaster. ‘By Jove, he *can* rag !’ was the grateful and approving comment of one recounting to his friends an interview of this salutary character.

The personal appearance of Jowett, his uncertain manner, his long silences, broken at intervals by pithy sayings of worldly wisdom or suggestive criticism, his stern rebukes, his pleasure in hearing young men talk courageously before him—a pleasure which he enjoyed less frequently than he wished, for, to tell the truth, he was a very formidable person ; his ready appreciation of a very poor jest, which he valued, not for itself, but because it showed him that his young companion was becoming less shy—these and many other

personal characteristics have been frequently described, and have been made the foundation for innumerable stories, which would have delighted the Master himself had any one ventured to tell them to him.

For he was fond of stories, especially stories about Masters of Balliol. Dr. Jenkyns, the Master to whom he ascribed much of the greatness of the college, was to him a centre of legends which he was never weary of repeating. At any gathering of old Balliol men he used to deliver admirable speeches, full of anecdotes and reminiscences told in his simple and charming English. Then he was seen at his best, entirely happy, proud of the college to which he had devoted his life, and surrounded by old friends, most of them his pupils, who were to him his sons. On one such occasion he said that he thought old age to be in some ways the happiest part of a man's life. This was true for him. He had mellowed with age ; he had seen the fruits of his labours ; he had lived down enmity and misunderstanding ; he had himself become indulgent to his former foes, and had come to think better of the world than he did in the stormy days of the *Essays and Reviews*.

His intellectual influence is hard to describe, and would be described differently by different men. It was an influence to those who were

diffident or indolent of a galvanizing kind, irritating, almost discouraging, for he seemed hard to satisfy, too sharp and severe in his criticism of first attempts to deal with new and difficult questions in speculative or political philosophy.

It is possible that some of the weaker among his pupils would have profited more from gentler treatment; but in the majority of cases his constant insistence on the possibility and necessity of doing better had a wonderful effect, and he got the best out of a man. He said little, and that little negative and critical, about the opinions, a *réchauffé* of which, gathered from books, some of us served up to him in our weekly essays, read to him when he seemed half-asleep, and ought certainly to have been in bed; but his sharp ‘I don’t think that’s true’, or, ‘Is that good English?’ would show that he was wide awake. The summariness of his judgements, pronounced on some perhaps distorted theory of Mill or Mansel, would make the essayist bolder to think for himself. In this respect Jowett was like Socrates, one of his models, for out of Socrates and Samuel Johnson he constructed for himself a mixed ideal, combining critical and very positive elements. He was sometimes amusingly dogmatic: in a walk along the banks of the Tummel, where many Balliol men have walked with him,

he refused, on *a priori* grounds, to admit that trout could or did lie with their heads up-stream—the first shock to his hearer's belief in the Master's infallibility.

His laborious life was one of the secrets of his power; for if he did not spare others, he did not spare himself. He had his reward—the success of his college, honour, and troops of friends—and his memory will be perpetuated in Balliol in the way he would have liked best.

The writer feels that his account of Balliol and its rulers thirty years ago must wear the appearance of extravagant eulogy. It may be that through the kindly mist of years faults or failings are indistinctly seen—that sometimes this tutor was cross, that tutor unreasonable, the Dean vexatious, the lecturer dull, that our teachers were only human beings—that we perhaps were lazy, and conceited, and ignorant, and ill-behaved, and were not among those happy ones who know their own blessings when they have them. But the eulogy is not consciously exaggerated or insincere.

## AN OLD OXFORD COMMON-ROOM

DURING the last twenty years we have been reading many books about distinguished Oxford men. Cardinal Newman, Dr. Pusey, Dean Church, Mr. T. Mozley, Mr. Keble, and Mr. Ward, have, either in writings of their own or through biographers, given us a complete and vivid picture of the men and questions of the Tractarian movement—a picture indeed so vivid and attractive that there is a danger lest other aspects of thought and work in Oxford should drop out of view.

The writer would be the last to undervalue either of the two great movements which have transformed Oxford within the last sixty years : Tractarianism, and the Liberalism which was its natural consequence, were revivals of religious and intellectual life. The biography of Oxford Liberalism is as yet only half written, but when complete will probably be less interesting than the history of Tractarianism, for the former was mainly negative ; the other was strongly affirmative of many things : and more dramatic interest centres round the conversion of Newman and the revolt of Pattison and Froude than round the first

University Commission, or the abolition of Tests, or the *Essays and Reviews*.

The story of Tractarianism, as told in Newman's *Apologia*, is so full of reality and pathos ; the convictions of the men who gave the impulse were so sincere, their characters so pure and lofty, that we are carried away, and see things as they saw them—they whose interest was so concentrated on one issue, to the exclusion of other questions, secular and religious, of at least equal importance, that they lived, be it said with all respect, in a world of their own making. We are apt to forget that there were Oxford men in those days who were hostile or indifferent to Tractarianism—not merely country clergymen and lawyers brought up to vote against it with more zeal than knowledge on the broadest party grounds, but men of learning and ability, who were doing their work, educational or literary, silently, exercising the influence of a quiet life, ignoring questions which seemed to them dangerous, or at best unprofitable. There were others who plunged into the strife and fought Tractarianism ; others who neither worked, nor taught, nor fought, but shot, or hunted, or saturated themselves with Greek, or did nothing but grow old. It is sometimes forgotten that Oxford was a larger place, and showed greater diversities of character and

interests, than would appear from the memoirs of those who were then unquestionably its best known men.

The quarter of a century after the Reform Bill was the close of a distinct period in the history of Oxford. By the Commission of 1854 changes deep and far-reaching were introduced : the University of Laud gave place to modern Oxford ; the supremacy of the colleges, and still more the supremacy of the Heads of Houses, was diminished ; and the curriculum of studies was enlarged. These and other changes, more important than any Ordinances of Commissioners, were the product of the mental stir which was agitating England and Europe—as much its product, though in a narrow area, as the Reform Bill or the Revolution of July.

But the writer aims not at themes so high as the solidarity of European thought, or even the nature and causes of the Oxford Revolution. He wishes to speak only of a social change, of no great importance, but perhaps of interest and worth recording ; one of the minor changes due to the same causes as Tractarianism or Liberalism and University Reform—the disappearance of a type of College Head and College Fellow—a type which could have been produced only in an English University, and which is passing, if it has

not passed, into extinction as final and complete as that which has overtaken the dodo or the megatherium. The men who ruled or worked or idled in the college of the pre-Commission period were probably not superior to their successors in energy or learning, but they were more picturesque. A student of character and manners would have found among them more variety, more eccentricity if you will, than he can find now in the body of gentlemen, very much like other gentlemen, and like each other, who govern and administer Oxford. They are hard-worked professional men, with the professional characteristics which hide, if not destroy, individuality: they are too busy, too open-minded, too cosmopolitan to be as quaint and interesting as the simple scholars, or fiery partisans, or eccentric hermits who enlivened and diversified the common-rooms of fifty or sixty years ago. The undergraduate is unchanging as Egypt: Commissions and Revolutions leave him as they find him, self-centred and serene; he is beyond them and above them; but his teachers are chameleons, and change colour with their surroundings. The traditions of Oxford fade rapidly away; the autocratic Head is no more; the 'idle Fellow' here and there survives, mostly in London clubs, where he can be idle without discomfort or discredit, and can escape the irritating spectacle

of that unceasing activity, political, social, philanthropic, which seems to him not far removed from restlessness and vanity.

The writer will attempt to describe the Head and Fellow of former days by giving an account of the common-room of his own college—moved partly by natural piety and love for the home in which he has spent the best part of his life ; partly by the fact that Wadham common-room twenty-nine years ago, when he first entered it, was a typical specimen of the old-fashioned kind. It had changed less than most common-rooms, for up till 1867 the Fellowships were not open to members of other colleges. Its traditions were uniform and unbroken, like traditions handed down from generation to generation in a family ; it had not been altered nor conventionalized ; in its atmosphere character could live and flourish.

The men to be described were in the ordinary sense of the word obscure : only one of them was known outside Oxford ; the rest, in their later days at least, were little known outside their own college. But obscure men may be interesting if they are the last of their race. And indeed in this age of notoriety and self-advertisement there is something refreshing about obscure persons—obscure not because they were dull or feeble, but because they were lazy, or contented, or diffident,

or careless of distinction. Faults come to be more kindly regarded as they become more rare, and indolence, self-distrust, lack of ambition, may come to be held virtues in the twentieth century—already they are distinctions, at any rate pleasing infirmities ; and there is a large field for the biographer in the lives of undistinguished persons.

Wadham, the most beautiful of Oxford colleges in the opinion of its sons, and the most beautiful next to their own in the opinion of the sons of other colleges, stood forty years ago almost in the country, with nothing north or east of it save the Museum and green fields: it is still in a great measure what it was called, the Country College, for though it has neighbours close to it in Mansfield and Manchester Colleges, yet these and the cricket-grounds which lie between Wadham and the Cherwell, and farther north the Parks, make one spacious region of almost country—a region of grass and tree and silence, broken only by the songs of birds, and the shouts of Matthew Arnold's 'young barbarians all at play'.

It is a quiet old college; not old as age is reckoned in Oxford, for it is only nearing the end of its third century, but the soft colouring of the silver-grey stone, crumbled and honeycombed on the south and west, where sun and rain and wind beat on it, gives it the appearance of indefinite

antiquity. The beauty of the buildings is in their simplicity and purity; they are like some great Elizabethan or Jacobean country-house turned into a college, splendid yet homely, possessing that double charm which no palace or castle or cathedral has in the same measure—the charm of stately beauty, and the charm of the human interest which belongs to the home of generations who have spent there the happiest years of life preparing themselves for distinction and success, or obscurity or failure. As you stand in the well-known college garden, one side of which is bounded by the chapel and long line of wall and gables showing half white half grey against the sward from which they rise, you might fancy, if you were a Platonist, that here Plato might have realized the dream of his Republic, and made a home for the chosen youth who were to rule and defend his State; here amid things beautiful 'from which come effluences wholesome for the soul, like a breeze bringing health from blessed regions'.<sup>1</sup> The Educated Woman, with her unerring perception of the fitness of things, has already, it is whispered, marked Wadham for her own when the day of reckoning comes, and men will have to share with women not merely degrees, but buildings and endowments. She has chosen well, for Tennyson could

<sup>1</sup> *Plato, Republic*, 401, C.

have imagined no fitter home for the Princess and her companions.

The founders of the college were Nicholas Wadham and Dorothy his wife. He was a Somersetshire squire of high lineage and large estates. His wife was a Petre, and brought to him some of the wealth which the courtiers of Henry VIII gained when the monasteries were suppressed. Her stern hard face, preserved in her portraits, expresses the despotic vigour with which she probably ruled her husband, and certainly ruled the college which he planned but did not live to see. The college statutes, in the framing of which she took an active part, anticipated many modern ideas : the Fellowships were all of them tenable by laymen, and were terminable, though she gave a young doctor or lawyer eighteen years to make himself a practice, instead of the scanty seven years with which he has now to be content. But there is nothing in her countenance to suggest that she anticipated or would have approved of the modern reform or perversion of her statutes which gives a place in her college to married Fellows ; there is rather an expression which makes one of these anomalies avert his eyes. ‘Thereby hangs a tale’ which might suggest a new situation to our exhausted novel-writers. The foundress, so the story runs,

chose for her first Warden a clergyman whose *beaux yeux* touched the heart of the lone widow ; she loved him and would fain have married him, but he was cold and irresponsible. He learnt ‘ *furens quid femina possit* ’ when she introduced the first change into her statutes and ordained that no Warden of Wadham should marry—an ordinance which remained unaltered for two hundred years, till it was repealed for the benefit of Warden Symons by a clause, it is said, appended to a Turnpike Act. Modern criticism respects a love-story no more than it respects the Pentateuch. A comparison of dates shows that Dorothy was wellnigh twice as old as the coy Warden, and that the story is at least improbable. Faith, however, defies criticism.

The history of her college has been quiet and uneventful—one of honourable usefulness : it has done good service to Church and State, and will do more ; it has its roll of English worthies, and will enlarge it. In that roll is found the name of Warden Wilkins, the centre of that group of savants who were often gathered together in the Warden’s lodgings over the college gateway, and who, a few years later when they met in London, founded the Royal Society. John Evelyn describes him as the ‘ universally curious Dr. Wilkins ’, and found much pleasure in his company.

He invented or projected a universal language which has met the fate that threatens Volapuk ; but he was more practical than many philosophers, for he married Cromwell's sister ; held high preferment under Charles I ; was made Master of Trinity, Cambridge by Richard Cromwell, and Bishop of Chester by Charles II—a career which shows great powers of adaptation to environment.

Admiral Blake was a commoner of the college, and Christopher Wren a scholar. Rochester and Sedley received at Wadham an education, the precepts of which they did not practise at the Court of Charles II. Ironside, its Warden, withstood James II when he attempted to make Oxford a Roman Catholic seminary. Onslow, the great Speaker of the House of Commons ; Harris, the author of *Hermes* ; Hody, the Hebrew scholar ; and in later days Lord Westbury, and the vigorous thinkers who first made known in England the philosophy of Comte, have sustained the honour of their college. Its history has been written, more fully perhaps than the history of any Oxford college, by two of its alumni. Mr. R. B. Gardiner has given us, in his *Register of Wadham College*, a laborious and faithful record of the names and parentage and academical career of all its members from 1613, the date of its foundation, till the present day. Mr. Jackson, in a beautiful book,

has written of the architecture and history of the college of which he was a Fellow, and is now an Honorary Fellow ; and has reproduced and perpetuated many of its most characteristic features in the new schools, the new wing of Trinity, and other buildings with which he has enriched Oxford, and yet—no small achievement—preserved its distinctive ancient charm. He has preserved also what can be gleaned from records of the early history of his College—quaint and interesting details, of value for the economist, and still greater value for the student of ‘sociology’, the new name for human nature ; letters written by mothers to sons, or sisters to brothers, which show that boys were sometimes bad, and women always good and kind, in the seventeenth as in the nineteenth century.

The Warden of the college in 1867, when the writer had the good fortune to become one of its Fellows, was Benjamin Parsons Symons. He was known by other names, and was perhaps most commonly called Big Ben by reason of his great strength and stature. He was a man of mark in Oxford, and known outside it as a prominent representative of the Evangelical party : as such he came into collision with the High Churchmen in the stormy days, and his college was regarded for many years as a hotbed of Evangelicalism, and

was in some quarters unpopular on that account. It suffered perhaps the Nemesis of sectarianism, and its members may have been as narrow as its critics ; but it had a character of its own, a certain sturdiness and vigorous Protestantism, if we may use that term of reproach.

Dr. Symons was, we have said, a man of stature, tall, burly, and strong—so strong indeed that he is said to have deterred a crowd of undergraduates who sought at Commemoration to storm the gate of the Theatre, which he guarded, by the mere threat, ‘ Gentlemen, stand back, or I shall be obliged to exert my strength ’.

His mind corresponded to his body ; it was burly and strong rather than fine and subtle : it is probable that he never knew a doubt, for he had all the strength of undisturbed conviction. He saw clearly what he desired, and possessed a good deal of Napoleonic directness in the choice of means to ends. His will was strong, and till age enfeebled him he governed as well as reigned in his college. He could not endure contradiction, for opposition seemed to him a sign of incompetence or perverse rebelliousness. So little did he respect the opinions of those who differed from him, that he would use arguments which he must have known to be absurd : thus when one of his Fellows complained of draughts of bitter

cold in chapel, caused by some system of ventilation invented by the Warden, he called them ‘currents of warm air’. For all his real ability, he seemed sometimes stupid and deficient in the sense of the ridiculous: thus in a famous lecture on the Articles, notes of which might have been found in many a country parsonage fifty years ago, he spoke of final causes and adaptations in the world, and the evils which might have arisen had nature made mistakes, and slapping one of the brawny legs which supported his great frame, exclaimed, ‘Why, this might have been the leg of an elephant’. Indeed the elephant would have had no reason to complain.

But he could be quick and dexterous when occasion needed. He had administered a serious rebuke to an undergraduate for irregularity in attendance at chapel. The victim, who was a most scrupulous chapel-goer, summoned by a mistake due to a confusion of names, pleaded that he had not missed a chapel during term, and that the other Smith must be the defaulter. The old man did not apologize: he praised the youth for his regularity, but bade him beware lest it should ‘degenerate into formalism’. It was the mixture of opposite and usually incompatible qualities that made him notable and interesting—the mixture of ready wit with stupidity, a stupidity often

ironical ; of despotic self-assertion with good-humour, for, like not a few successful men who have had their way for many years, he was genial when not crossed, fond of a joke, full of *bonhomie* and genuine kindness.

He combined mental narrowness with strong common-sense and sagacity ; prejudice with great insight into character, at least character of the ordinary kind. He was, like Dr. Johnson, dictatorial, something of a sophist, weak when his prejudices misled him, strong when he judged with a fair mind—like him to some extent in bodily presence and in voice, though Johnson had not the lisp which gave character and point to Symons's most trivial utterances. It would have been delightful to see them together, and it is not certain that victory would have been with Johnson, for the Warden was not easily put down.

But Dr. Symons was no mere bundle of inconsistencies, no mere comic character ; he was a resolute and able man who could make himself felt and feared. His administration of the college both as tutor and as Warden was thoroughly efficient and successful. Though his Fellows and undergraduates laughed at his oddities, as men will laugh at the foibles of the strong, they did not laugh unkindly ; but they laughed a good deal, and let their minds play round him, inventing

stories about him which were all at least ethically true.

A legend, for instance, was current that the champion of orthodox evangelicalism was first made aware of the existence, at any rate in his own college, of Broad Church tendencies by a freshman of eighteen. He was a volatile half-French boy, with something in him of the Voltairean spirit, who very readily in the presence of the Warden signed the Thirty-nine Articles, as all undergraduates were then required to do. As he wiped his pen he turned to the Warden and said, ‘Yes, I like these old forms’. His further history is lost in obscurity and gloom.

Mrs. Symons—‘Lydia’, for undergraduates do not hesitate to call the wife of their Head, not to her face, by her Christian name—must have been a woman of character and strong convictions, of whom the writer, who did not know her, for she died several years before he became a Fellow of Wadham, would speak with no levity or disrespect. She, like her husband, was an earnest Evangelical—indeed the more earnest of the two in this sense, that she thought the Warden sometimes showed mundane, even material, tendencies which called for remonstrance or rebuke. Thus at a breakfast-party the Warden gave some undergraduates an account of the funeral of the Duke

of Wellington, which he had attended as a member of the deputation from the University. He said that he had been impressed by many things, but most of all by the vast concourse of spectators, and that as he gazed at the thousands who packed the streets the reflection occurred to him, ‘Where will all these people get their dinner?’ ‘I think, my dear, you ought rather to have thought where will they get their spiritual food!’ Mrs. Symons exclaimed with some acerbity. The Warden could only murmur, ‘Oh, yes; of course, my dear’.

But Mrs. Symons could not only rebuke her husband, she could help him in difficulties with true wifely help. When he reached his ‘anecdoteage’ he was apt to repeat his stories, and it was possible to prophesy with much accuracy when a story would come round at the breakfast-parties, in which the Warden showed himself a very kindly and genial host. A freshman, invited to one such breakfast, was informed by his friends that a certain story would be told. The Warden told it. To the general delight and consternation, the foolish youth remarked, after the due laughter had subsided, ‘They told me, sir, you would give us that story’. Mrs. Symons had the wit and presence of mind to break the silence by saying, ‘How pleasant it is to find that the good Warden’s words are so well remembered in the college! ’

The late Master of Balliol much admired the strength and sagacity of Dr. Symons, and was fond of comparing him with Dr. Jenkyns, the Master to whom Balliol owes the beginnings of its greatness. They, like Routh and Hawkins, were leaders of men in their little kingdoms—not *primi inter pares*, but absolute monarchs, such as Dorothy Wadham meant the Head of her college to be: in the quaint language of her statutes she describes him as the queen bee, in whose absence the hive '*obstupescit*'—a word impossible to translate, but expressing bewilderment, confusion, desolation, paralysis.

For good or ill, this theory of the position and influence of the Head of a house has gone the way of the theory of the divine right of kings, of which it was the last relic, and of other theories which survive only in Germany or Russia or Kumasi. The autocratic head is impossible now—some will say because reverence and obedience have left the earth; others will give a more natural explanation, and invoke the Spirit of the Age, which explains so many things, which certainly seems to be dispensing with heroes and leaders of men, whether Mahomets or Luthers or Heads of Houses. A Theophrastus would regret the loss of the strong man, resolute or obstinate, because he had power and knew how to use it,

no longer existent among us, who can neither command nor obey.

Of quite another type was Dr. Griffiths, the next Warden—a type more in accordance with popular ideas. In a novel or on the stage, if he has appeared there, the College Head is an elderly clergyman of polished but formal manners, courteous and precise, with a certain stateliness about him in keeping with the antiquity and sober dignity of his surroundings. Such was John Griffiths, as his friends called him, for it would have been impossible to call him Jack. The transparent goodness of the man, his kindness and refined consideration for the feelings and interests of others, made formality in him something piquant, like a flavour in a salad or salt, without which goodness is insipid—a kind of east wind in manner, which, though at times disagreeable, is bracing and refreshing. He was above all things accurate—of an accuracy somewhat overstrained, such as is found in leisured University dignitaries, who have time to be precise, and whose circumstances are more favourable to hair-splitting than the press and hurry of Manchester or London. Stories are told of the great pleasure (for he was human) which it gave him to correct mistakes. Dean Burgon, whose accuracy—except in textual criticism—was not conspicuous, sent to

him a short account of Wadham College, asking for criticisms and suggestions. The manuscript was returned with no suggestions, and no more criticism than pencilled here and there the words ‘how’, ‘when’, ‘where’—those awkward interrogatives which are more formidable than most arguments, and which Dr. Griffiths used with terrible effect on rash and sweeping utterances.

His slight, well-set-up figure, his scrupulous neatness in dress, his skill and taste in judging prints or pictures—even wines and cookery, abstemious though he was—were in keeping with his other qualities, producing a consistent and harmonious whole—a personification of accuracy, caution, sound judgement, refinement, and gentle dignity difficult to describe. Never did the writer see him to greater advantage than when, in the College Hall at a children’s Christmas party, the Warden, then past seventy, danced a country dance with a little girl of eight. Dancing was once not a shuffle nor a romp, but an art; and the Warden, perhaps a little proud of his neat feet and silver shoe-buckles, gave an exhibition of it which suggested the stately courtesy of the minuet, and ought to have shamed the young men present, whose dancing was more vigorous than graceful. To the imaginative eye, the grim features of Dorothy looking from her portrait on the wall

seemed to soften and regard with indulgence the frolics of a Warden after her own heart; for he was an old bachelor, and no harm could come of them. Dr. Griffiths was a genuine product of old Oxford, of the quiet leisure, the easy life, the ceremonious and clerical society which have passed away; the product also of a certain  $\eta\thetaos$  of the place, which has survived and will survive all change.

In their Fellows still more than in their Heads the colleges under the old conditions produced marked types of men. The Head of a college had to mix in society, and lead a comparatively public life; a Fellow could live, if he chose, in absolute solitude, in a seclusion like Robinson Crusoe's, with no Man Friday to enliven it.

College life had a gruesome side, and its loneliness and monotony, when lived unwisely, brought shy or morbid men to melancholy ends, but of such we need not speak. In most cases, fortunately, nothing worse than eccentricity was the penalty of a solitary and in a sense an idle life—that is, a life without the wholesome stimulus of fixed duties and definite purpose. Men of course can live such lives in London, and with the same result; but Oxford offers stronger temptations than does a street off Piccadilly to adopt the quiet

life of ‘culture’, that *improba siren* who lures many victims.

Charles Douglas Ross was one of the ablest men in the Oxford of forty years ago. He is described by those who knew him then as a brilliant talker and a wit, a man of great intellectual force and keenness, and, though still young, of wide and varied learning—a combination of qualities so rare that their waste or failure is specially perplexing and pathetic. This brilliant man had latent in him that indolence, shyness, and eccentricity which in the movement of active life are brushed away like cobwebs, but, like cobwebs too in an unswept room, thicken and spread over a man’s mind if he lives alone and idle, even among books.

Ross lived in rooms in Wadham which overlooked the quiet college garden, one of those ideal homes of study in which often, alas! less fruitful work is done than in a dingy and noisy London lodging. His sitting-room and bedroom were piled to the ceiling with books; books overflowed on chairs and sofas—books of all kinds, for their owner was omnivorous, and had the gift of tongues, and read many subjects in many languages. The writer knew him only in his later years, when he had come to dislike general society, and would sit moody and silent, flashing out now

and then in very startling epigrams or criticisms, which, though they made many persons uncomfortable, explained and justified the reputation for brilliant talk which he possessed in earlier days. But in a small company of persons whom he knew well, especially when dining *tête-à-tête* with some one whom custom had made acceptable to him, he would pour forth the treasures of his learning in quaint and unconventional, always luminous, utterances, of the incisive brevity which was the peculiar quality of his conversation. But in his conversation only did he show his wealth of knowledge : he wrote nothing save some pages of an Arabic dictionary, which were blown from his window into the garden, and he made no effort to recover them. Those lost pages were emblems of his wasted life—if wasted it was, for who can tell?

His favourite subject was philosophy. Like many other linguists, he used versions of the New Testament for acquiring the knowledge sufficient for his purpose of the numerous languages which he studied—many of them deeply, more of them of course merely as materials for the generalizations in which he must have excelled, for he had a keen eye for subtle and remote analogies. He was said to have read all the versions of the New Testament published by the missionary societies,

and it is certain that he read a prodigious number of them. His knowledge also of genealogy and the history connected with it was deep and wide, for he was a well-born gentleman, and prided himself on his descent and family connexions, as every well-born Scottish gentleman does. Nor was he altogether free from the prejudices and fastidiousness which often accompany the consciousness of pedigree. He looked a gentleman with his striking, clear-cut, large-browed, melancholy face, and his handsome figure scrupulously, almost gorgeously, dressed, for he was something of a dandy ; but his good taste and careless ease made his splendour natural and dignified. Once he was persuaded to take some tutorial work in college, but the experiment was not successful : he did not ‘ suffer fools gladly ’, as a college tutor must learn occasionally to do, and was reported to have got rid of troublesome pupils by strange methods, even to the upsetting of his tea-kettle over one who asked him too closely and persistently the meaning of ‘ metaphysics ’. His quaint sayings were innumerable, not always suited to the place in which they were uttered : thus at the service in chapel which used to precede Fellowship elections, he was wont in the recitation of the *Te Deum* to respond audibly, ‘ The goodly profits of the Fellowship ’. This was before the

days of agricultural depression. He was a formidable person if irritated by inexcusable ignorance or affectation, and punctured wind-bags somewhat ruthlessly, to the dismay, not unmixed with pleasure, of the company. But, like a gentleman as he was, he seldom exercised his dangerous powers, and then only on extreme provocation.

Whether an active life would have made him a happier man, and his great gifts more useful to society, it is impossible to tell. Perhaps the strain of London no less than the solitude of Oxford would have widened ‘the rift within the lute’, for it is possible to become ‘queer’ in London as well as on Salisbury Plain. It is probable that he was an illustration of the dangers of that doubtful blessing, a comfortable income secured to a young man for life—a blessing doubly dangerous when to it is added the right to a home in a beautiful college in that most beautiful of cities, which has been to some a Capua.

The ‘idle Fellow’, as Lord Salisbury called him, has ceased to be. Fellowships are now tenable for seven years only, and do not tempt a man to idleness, for the time is short. As in all changes there is a mixture of loss and gain, college life has lost something of the variety of old days, when every one was not a hard-worked lecturer or tutor.

Whether resident or non-resident, the ‘idle Fellow’ sometimes took wider views of things than his busy colleagues took, for he was more ‘disengaged’. A non-resident Fellow especially, when he came to a college meeting, brought with him from London the welcome breath of a larger air than that of common-room. He enjoyed himself, and was the cause of enjoyment to others; for though he may have felt himself a Rip Van Winkle among the wide-awake and advanced young thinkers, yet the wine was good, and the fire burnt brightly in common-room as of old, while the young men listened with at least the semblance of courtesy to the reminiscences of the fogey—for he was probably past forty, and seemed old to them; while some perhaps, if they were not inordinately youthful, were glad to hear of other experiences, other manners, than their own. Thus in Wadham the ‘non-residents’ were always welcome: the writer may not speak of two such who are still living, but he may speak of Henry King and Hyman, who are now memories only.

King was a clubman and a scholar, who lived mainly in the ‘Garrick’, partly in the library, partly in the whist-room. He was a barrister who had long ceased to tread the law-courts—like most lawyers, a strong Conservative, who at college meetings voted against all proposals with-

out exception as meaning change, but disarmed resentment by his frank and humorous Toryism. His scholarship was of a type less common now than it was a century ago, when many English gentlemen and statesmen knew their Virgil and Horace by heart, and loved the classics for their literary charm, and wisdom, and applicability to life. He was fond, as such scholars are, of translating, and turned Ovid's *Metamorphoses* into pretty English verse. To 'Maga' he was a frequent contributor, not only of prose articles but of very charming and graceful verses, both original and translations, and his initials, H. K., were very familiar to 'Maga's' readers. His humour was of the driest kind, good-naturedly cynical—a wholesome discipline, though irritating, for young reformers, who could not brook opposition, and had not learnt the lesson which J. S. Mill at the India House found so difficult and valuable, that in this perverse world you must be content with as much of your own way as you can get.

Welcome too was Orlando Bridgman Hyman, in whose name there was something of the oddity and piquancy of the man. He was a classical scholar who might have rivalled Elmsley or Porson had he not been an 'idle Fellow' with no incentive, no ambition. The accuracy of his knowledge was extraordinary, and it was no less varied

than exact; for he was as familiar with Manilius and Nonnus as with Sophocles and Virgil. Atheneaeus and Lucian supplied him with a fund of stories which he found as amusing, and made to others as amusing, as the last London scandal, or *mot* of Mr. Labouchere. He had a strange, Jewish, wizened, sallow face, with black, bright, sparkling eyes, which twinkled with fun and malice as he half pleased, half shocked Warden Symons with stories which the old man relished more than he approved; stories with no harm in them, but a little too *risqués* for narration to an Evangelical dignitary.

Hyman's short thin figure was clad always in a dress tail-coat, which gave him an old-world appearance, reminding one of Dr. Jowett, or of the pictures of Beau Brummel and his friends—though the resemblance was confined to the high collar and necktie, tied, however, like one of Beau Brummell's 'failures', for Hyman was no dandy. Much solitude in London lodgings had made him retiring and reserved in manner even with intimate friends; almost deferential, but in his deference there lurked a dangerous irony, for he had a keen sense of humour, and loved, like Socrates, to affect humility, and ask those innocent and awkward questions which best expose pretentious ignorance. He had the strange habits

of a recluse: his closest friends were his dogs, with whom he might be seen walking on sunny mornings in Hyde Park, a curious company. He read innumerable books, and tore out the pages as he read them, for he thought few modern books worth reading twice. But despite his eccentricities his mind was sane and clear, and his shrewd common sense made his judgement valuable in all practical matters, save the regulation of his own life.

There was something strange and melancholy in the funeral of the lonely scholar on a dreary afternoon at Kensal Green. A few old friends and pupils, and those of the Fellows of his college who were able to be present, attended it; and some, perhaps all of them, as they said *Vale* to their old comrade, thought with keen regret of his kindly cheery ways and his great gifts, to all appearance wasted—if waste in this strange universe there be. His curious learning departed with him: he wrote nothing—nothing, at least, that has been preserved. His name, like that of his brother Fellow and brother scholar Ross, has been ‘writ in water’. They died with ‘all their music in them’—strange music, perhaps, it would have been, but worth hearing. Why is it that wit and learning are like oil and vinegar, and do not go together? Erasmus and Porson, and, in hardly less degree, Ross and Hyman, had both. Johnson

and Mommsen show that humour and erudition are compatible, but what shall we say of ——? Well—some things are best left unsaid.

Difficult as it is to give even a shadowy portrait of unknown men, the writer has made the attempt, because the class of which the persons described were specimens is vanishing and can ‘return no more’. It is a class which used much to puzzle observant foreigners. To them a life-pension given in the name of learning to a lad of two-and-twenty, who was not bound to open a book or write a line during the half-century for which he might, and probably would, hold his Fellowship, seemed an absurdity; as foreigners euphemize it, an English anomaly. Nor indeed was it easy to explain to them precisely the position and functions of Heads of Houses. But many English anomalies work well. The system of idle Fellowships did a good thing in a roundabout and clumsy wasteful way: it endowed not learning but ability, and opened to hundreds of distinguished men the road to wealth and honour and high public service.

And even the idlest of idle Fellows is sometimes missed by those who knew him, though they may not be able to justify their fond regret. But it would be hard to justify from one point of view the existence of a daisy in a meadow or a mountain flower: they, like the idle Fellow, have their

*raison d'être* in their restfulness and uselessness. 'With joy the stars perform their shining', and what more of them ought you to require? They are beautiful, and it is a pleasure to behold them; so was it with some idle Fellows. Happy idleness is a charm which is fading out of modern life in this *fin de siècle*, when the aim of those even who are said to live for amusement is 'to break the record'. The term *fin de siècle* may have more meaning in it than Nordau thinks. It is probable that in the twentieth century the reaction will come, a new era will begin, and over-paced humanity will cease to regard ruthless competition as its natural and desirable condition.

But such speculations take us far away from a quiet old college.

Fain would the writer revive, even to a few and for an hour, the recollection of those men, now long dead, whom others as well as he remember with kindness or affection, who added to the charm and interest of their beautiful college the attraction of their own quaint and vigorous personalities. He feels moved to the attempt by that *necessitudo*, as the Romans called it—that compelling obligation of loyalty and friendship arising from colleagueship and common associations, which is happily an enduring quality of every Oxford college.

## OXFORD, PAST AND PRESENT

THE nineteenth century is the most eventful in the long history of Oxford. Other changes will take place, and are now approaching, in this great University; perhaps also in Cambridge, her more sedate sister; but they will not be so profound and so fruitful of consequences as the Oxford revolution. That happily was less sanguinary than the French Revolution, to which it was in some measure due—no Vice-Chancellors or Heads of Houses were beheaded, or fled to other countries—they remained at their posts with unwavering fidelity; no property was confiscated, except at a later stage, by University Commissioners. Things moved slowly in the English way—progress was ‘continuous and calm’, or comparatively calm, and the Oxford of to-day is after all the Oxford of a hundred years ago, but *quantum mutata!*

The writer, who has known Oxford for nearly half a century, will, with much diffidence, attempt to give an account of the transformation, in the faint hope that he may move some one to write a book which might be entitled ‘A Century of Oxford History’. The materials for such a history

are abundant, and the subject is of surpassing interest, especially at the present time. The writer of it must be a son of Oxford, for its history cannot be written from without : he must have lived and worked in Oxford through its many changes, and have kept his eyes open : he must belong to no narrow coterie : he must be learned but intelligent, and of a liberal and generous mind. There is, of course, no such a person, nor will he ever exist ; but, if history is to be written at all, a lower standard than the ideal must be accepted. Gibbon was an undergraduate of Magdalen College in 1752–1754. He says hard things of his College and his University :

‘ I arrived at Oxford with a stock of erudition which might have puzzled a doctor, and a degree of ignorance of which a schoolboy would have been ashamed. To the University of Oxford I acknowledge no obligation ; and she will as cheerfully renounce me for a son, as I am willing to disclaim her for a mother. . . . During my first weeks I constantly attended lessons in my tutor’s room, but as they appeared equally devoid of profit and pleasure, I was once tempted to try the experiment of a formal apology. The apology was accepted with a smile—no plan of study was recommended for my use—no exercises were presented for his inspection, and at the most precious season of youth whole days and weeks were suffered to elapse without labour or amusement, without advice or account.’

An undergraduate nowadays might complain of the conduct of his tutor, but his complaints

would be of too much ‘inspection’, too much advice, and very rigorous account.

Gibbon’s fierce indictment was made also against laxity of discipline—in the course of one winter he ‘visited Bath, made a tour in Buckinghamshire, and took four excursions to London, without once hearing the voice of admonition, without once feeling the hand of control’. Neither Gibbon nor Shelley could have been pupils easy to manage, and both were expelled from their colleges. Sympathy is always on the side of youth and genius, but Gibbon and Shelley were both of them impossible persons. The great historian possessed all the historical virtues, except the most rare and important of them all—‘the power of understanding, even sympathetically understanding, opinions which we do not hold’. Oxford represented to him indolence, and bigotry of the worst type, that in which there is a large mixture of hypocrisy; he judged his University by the college and the men he knew. Had he been at Magdalen 150 years later his verdict would have been different, if I may venture to commend that great foundation. Any one who has read the *Letters of Radcliffe and James*<sup>1</sup> knows that Gibbon’s description of Oxford is inaccurate and unjust if taken to apply to the University as a

<sup>1</sup> Oxford Historical Society, vol. ix.

whole, and not to Magdalen in particular. Radcliffe entered Queen's College in 1743; James entered it in 1745; James's son in 1778; and the letters which passed between the three correspondents cover a period of twenty-eight years, from 1755 to 1783. They show that not all Oxford tutors were ignorant, dull, and idle; not all Oxford undergraduates vicious and illiterate. Indeed in those days, when examinations, except of the most perfunctory kind, were unknown, there was a 'freedom of study' which contrasts not unfavourably with the excessive organization and ruthless drill which have turned colleges into something like cramming establishments; tutors into 'drudges', as Mark Pattison called them forty years ago; undergraduates, the best of them, into almost passive recipients of intellectual food, like pemmican, neither savoury nor digestible. Few blessings are unmixed. Competition among the colleges for distinction in the class-lists is very keen, though decently, if not successfully, dissimbled. No one in Oxford now is idle, incredible though the assertion may appear. Even the passman's life is not wholly a happy one. But of him, the savage—though not 'untutored'—something will be said hereafter, for he is a very interesting person, important for good or evil, and controversies are gathering round him, threatening his existence.

But activity, though feverish, and earnestness and clean living, are better than the sloth, neglected duty, and living far from clean, which were prevalent, though not universal, in Oxford when Gibbon knew it: they make his *saeva indignatio* perfectly intelligible though somewhat indiscriminate, for he was misunderstood and disappointed, and had received stone for bread. An old Balliol man records with reluctance the statement of Dean Prideaux that there was a public-house in Broad Street, the Split Crow, 'where the Balliol men continually lie, and by perpetual bubbling add art to their natural stupidity to make themselves perfect sots'.<sup>1</sup> The present writer is consoled by the reflection that Balliol men were probably no worse than the Fellows of other colleges, and that now they have mended their ways, as he knows from frequent enjoyment of their generous but sober hospitality. Prideaux wrote these words three-quarters of a century before Gibbon entered Oxford, but there is reason to believe that in 1752 there was still room for improvement in the conduct of Balliol undergraduates, if not of the Fellows, of that great college. Its history, like that of most Oxford colleges, is full of strange vicissitudes and moral lessons.

<sup>1</sup> See Mr. Davis's charming *History of Balliol College* for this and other curious details.

Matthew Arnold in a famous passage has expressed what every one feels who knows Oxford and has come under its charm ; yet his utterance of loyal devotion to the place which made him what he became is now almost as misleading as was Gibbon's utterance of hatred and contempt. Oxford is still medieval, yet intensely modern : it is still the home of causes which are not lost, and of beliefs which are not impossible : it still dreams, though its dreams are feverish and incoherent, some of them, and of the future as well as of the past. It has undertaken to educate everybody and in everything, and everywhere, at least within the range of University Extension Lectures. There is nothing which it does not profess to teach, from theology to military strategy. There is no branch of learning which does not appear in that epitome of all things knowable—the University Examination Statutes ; all but one, not mentioned there, the science of athletics, which is more effectively taught and learnt than any other in our universities as well as in our public schools.

Within the last fifty-six years there have been added to the old curriculum, schools or examinations in modern history, law, natural science in all its branches, oriental languages and literatures, the English language and literature, European

languages and literatures, geography, the theory and practice of education, economics, forestry, rural economy, anthropology, military history and strategy, engineering and mining subjects, public health, classical archaeology. This list is designedly unscientific, and the subjects mentioned run into each other, but the impression intended to be conveyed to the reader is one of bewilderment and a sense that there is nothing which may not be learnt at new Oxford. Buildings, and apparatus, and stipends for the teachers of these subjects, have been partially provided at great expense by an impoverished University, and by contributions from the colleges, some of them no less impoverished—these abodes, or rather preserves, of indolence and luxury, as they are represented to be by irresponsible chatterers to ignorant and credulous persons. By ‘Local’ Examinations and Extension Lectures Oxford has shown its sense of obligations outside the circle of a mile and a half from Carfax. It has also instituted examinations for leaving certificates at public schools, and accepts other certificates of various kinds as equivalent to a testamur obtainable by its own entrance examination—responsions, of which it is difficult to speak with patience, not because it is an entrance examination, for an examination is indispensable, but because it is

useless and vexatious in its present form, and discreditable to the University which is content with it, and to the schools which offer it, as the finished product, in many cases, of eight or nine years at school. But 'that is another story', more instructive than cheerful: the one blot on the good record of a University, anxious—perhaps nervously anxious—to do its duty.

Many persons whose opinions, though erroneous, are entitled to consideration, protest against these concessions to the 'spirit of the age'. They think that there is danger, if not certainty, that Oxford will be turned into a second-rate scientific University, and be reduced to the level of — I will not mention names. These pessimists do not realize the force of long tradition and innumerable associations—of the beauty and dignity of the place—of the college system, permanent as the college buildings, which will preserve the  $\eta\thetaos$  of Oxford for a period approaching to infinity, an  $\eta\thetaos$  which subdues and humanizes the most aggressive and clamorous of men of science, of whom the writer speaks with sincere respect. The issue between the old and the new learning can be decided only by controversy, and by the consequent friction in which heat is naturally generated—but the heat is diminishing; the issue is indeed decided—the new learning 'has come

to stay', and there is room in the University both for it and for its rival, or rather sister, to the benefit of both.

Oxford is preparing herself for the task which fate and fraud and fitness and duty, or a combination of them, have imposed on our race, and indirectly on her as a great national institution—the task of helping to educate young Englishmen not merely for work of all kinds at home, but work of all kinds in Greater Britain. '*Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento*'—the quotation is inevitable; it is long since it has been made in the House of Commons, where, if intelligible, it would be to some offensive as savouring of Imperialism, for Virgil 'thought imperially', and, like Horace, was a Jingo.

But Virgil's words appeal to a feeling which, though dissembled or disavowed, survives in the minds of most Englishmen, and is obscured, not eradicated, by the strife of parties. In Parliament and in the country a warm welcome has been given to the effort now being made, in the old as well as in the new universities, to meet new educational necessities. The success of that effort will serve to train future rulers and administrators in India, and in our other Eastern possessions, and in Africa, by teaching them how to fight famine and disease; make roads and railways;

drain pestilent morasses, plant or thin forests with discretion ; and educate agriculturists and school-masters. Mr. Keir Hardie would surely admit that as long as we stay in India we had better govern it intelligently by men who can do these things, or see that they are done. It is not merely for purposes called Imperial, but for home needs, that the undergraduates of our universities must be educated in many things which till recently have not been included in their curricula—we, the British people, must make ourselves efficient, for efficiency is the condition of existence in the struggle for supremacy which is coming, or has begun, between the East and West, as well as between France, or Germany, or the United States, and England. Efficiency is the product of education, and the universities are responsible for the due performance of a great political duty—to make our young men effective citizens for peace and war.

Grumbling critics complain that Oxford is going beyond her ‘proper sphere’, that much of this activity is no better than fussiness, and that its results are quite inadequate to the labour and money expended. The argument, from ‘a proper sphere’, is singularly weak, and involves a *petitio principii* of a flagrant kind : there is no more ‘question-begging epithet’ in our language than

the word proper. The results or harvests of this labour are some of them still in a future which may be long in coming, but may be confidently expected. University Extension Lectures are special objects of attack, as excursions from the proper sphere. It is asserted—less commonly now than formerly—that the teaching given by Extension Lectures produces in the hearers only the knowledge that ‘puffeth up’, and is valued, it is said with sheer brutality, as giving opportunities for flirtation. The last assertion may have in it a modicum of truth, but why should not young men and young women meet at a lecture as well as at a dance? The other assertion is wholly false. To many men and women, old and young, an Extension Lecture has been the beginning of their intellectual life—a fact incomprehensible to highly cultivated critics; to others it has given something desirable in frivolous or dreary lives—a wholesome and rational amusement.

Another change of great importance through which Oxford has passed in the last forty years is the change from something like a cathedral town into something like Cheltenham or Bath. Before 1870—a remarkable year in the history of Europe, and not less in the history of Oxford—there lived in it few ladies, in the conventional

meaning of the term, except the wives and daughters of Heads of Houses and Professors. With them the writer had at that time little acquaintance, save with the ladies whom he met at the Master's house at Balliol, and whose kindness and hospitality he gratefully remembers. The general impression—at least among undergraduates—was that, like the wives, and even the daughters, of clerical dignitaries in cathedral towns, they left something to be desired in respect of gaiety and that innocent freedom of behaviour which the French call *abandon*. They were said to be gracious, but in an official way—the inevitable characteristic of a small and semi-aristocratic society. It must be admitted that young curates and undergraduates in those days were stiff and diffident, and not easy to entertain.

The invasion of women, which began in 1870, has changed all that. The abolition of Tests and the removal of the obligation, under which many of the Fellowships had previously been held, to take Holy Orders, had the result that a tutor or a lecturer in a college was no longer content to hold office as a temporary employment till a living should fall vacant, but was ready to make teaching his profession for life, and, on the strength of it, to marry. Nor could his college keep him, if he was worth keeping, from the Bar or medicine or

schoolmastering, if he were forbidden to marry. By alterations, sanctioned by Privy Council, in the College Statutes, leave was given to him to take a wife. She could not conveniently live in the college—a building not designed nor adapted for domestic happiness ; therefore she and her husband must live outside the college. The demand for houses became great, and houses were built to meet it—most of them to the north of Oxford, where now stands a suburb called North Oxford, almost as large as South Kensington.

The change among the senior members of the college from monasticism to family life was a change both for the better and for the worse—for the worse, because the common-rooms were thinned : a quarter or a third of the number of Fellows lived out of college ; the old *camaraderie* was broken up, for it must be admitted that wives have sometimes a disintegrating influence, and do not always like their husband's old friends. There was at first some injury to college discipline : when a dean or tutor lives a mile away, and the times of his absence are reasonably calculable, the undergraduates enjoy themselves—but this inconvenience was after two or three years remedied by more stringent requirements of ‘pernoctation’ in term time. There came to be in hospitable Oxford many dinner-parties of a more exhilarating

kind than men's banquets in college rooms : a sociable tutor with a sociable wife found his expenses for entertainment greater than he could afford, for college tutors are not rich. On the other hand, married Fellows learnt something of the world and had their minds enlarged. To some of them marriage was a liberal education, and the prim and formal Oxford Don became comparatively playful and happy under softening influences ; influences exercised not on him only, but on the undergraduates, who were the better for the society of good and sensible women. Later, retired Indian civilians, and old soldiers, discovered Oxford : it was found to be nearer London than Leamington or Devonshire, and more attractive. The excellent ' High School for Girls ' offered a good and economical education for the daughters : for the boys preparatory schools had been established, one of them by leading members of the University, which became rivals of the best preparatory schools for Eton or Winchester, or schools less old and famous but equally efficient and less expensive. Oxford is a pleasant place to live in, and healthy enough, unless you encamp in regions near the Isis ; full of historic memories, of libraries, and of various amusements which attract all sorts and conditions of men—and of women. It has become a suburb

of London. Movements of all kinds, ecclesiastical, political, philanthropic, and social, are numerous and vigorous : the suffragette is ‘in evidence’ and ‘means business’, the socialist also—Christian and Secular—means the same. Oxford is no longer a ‘sleepy hollow’. Thackeray, in the *Book of Snobs*, writing of Cambridge University snobs, describes St. Boniface, its Dons and undergraduates, and the University, as it was when he was an undergraduate there some eighty years ago. *Mutatis mutandis*, his description would have been true also of Oxford at that date. ‘Universities’, he says, ‘are the last places into which reform penetrates.’ Now they are hotbeds of reform. Is the change improvement? ‘Change’, wrote Hooker, ‘is not made without inconvenience, even from the worse to the better.’

One of the most striking and important aspects of Oxford’s transformation is the disappearance of the languid indifferentism which prevailed in it from 1660 till Newman and his friends breathed life into the dry bones. Even Johnson, a man of strong religious convictions, intensely disliked the ‘Enthusiasm’ which he considered had wrecked both State and Church when the Puritans had the upper hand for nearly twenty years in England. To him ‘enthusiasm’ meant tyranny and fanaticism mixed with much hypocrisy : it had meant

the same to the philosophers—the founders of the Royal Society, who came to Oxford in 1645–1650 seeking ‘quiet and freedom and shelter from enthusiasm’. Johnson was unconquerably averse to its recrudescence in his own Church and University. When six students, who would not desist from publicly praying and exhorting, were expelled in 1768 from St. Edmund Hall, Boswell said to Johnson, ‘But was it not hard, sir, to expel them, for I am told they were good beings.’ Johnson replied, ‘I believe they were good beings, but they were not fit to be in the University of Oxford. A cow is a very good animal in the field, but we turn her out of a garden.’ Less familiar than this quotation is the story of the Head of an Oxford college who, many years later, told a candidate for admission when he professed a desire for ‘gospel teaching’, that he had ‘come to the wrong shop’. Both of these utterances are significant: if Johnson, a devout man, in whose devotion there was more than a tinge of something very like enthusiasm, could speak thus, it is easy to imagine the attitude towards the ‘righteous overmuch’ of indifferentists like some Heads of Houses of a later date. The history of the Oxford movement has been written from many points of view, critical and sympathetic, by Newman, and Church, and Moseley. It had

consequences of many kinds—political, ecclesiastical, and spiritual: it was a religious revival, to use a word which has been applied to another religious movement less stately, picturesque, and intellectual, but who can say less beneficial, than Tractarianism? Revivalism has produced as its permanent embodiment the Salvation Army, which does its work no less vigorously than the High Churchmen, but more exclusively, among the outcasts. Johnson would have involved in one condemnation both the movements, though he, whom ‘only an obstinate rationality’ kept from becoming a Roman Catholic, would have been less hard on Dr. Newman than on General Booth. With the later religious movement in Oxford, which began with the *Essays and Reviews*, Johnson would have had no sympathy whatever; it was based on an ‘enthusiasm’ of a kind specially odious to him, which he would have called the extravagance of reason.

In the sixties and the seventies, and in the early eighties, most of the clever young men, and clever young men follow fashion like other people, were by the law of reaction followers of Jowett, or Mark Pattison, or T. H. Green, or Mill, or Herbert Spencer, or Comte, or the uncompromising Huxley. Oxford was a *παντοπάλιον*, a general warehouse of opinions, if not beliefs, among which

Christianity held its place, but not a prominent place. It is somewhat of a *παντοπάλιον* still, though some of the intellectual fashions have disappeared or have become ghosts of their former selves. Positivism long ago migrated to London; Spencerianism is a ghost. Mill is by no means dead, though his followers are comparatively few and less submissive than they were. The influence of T. H. Green, based on his noble character and personal charm, still endures, though his philosophy is criticized like everything in Oxford except the multiplication-table. New Realism is to have its turn. But the most remarkable and significant change of all is that Christianity of a very definite kind has come back; the acceptance of it is no longer held to be a mark of obscurantism or intellectual inferiority, and it holds many of our most able and earnest men. There would be many Rip Van Winkles in Oxford were the leaders of fifty—even thirty—years ago to revisit the common-rooms and halls; they would find themselves in strange surroundings, and would be disappointed and perplexed.

Parallel to this change in philosophical and religious thought, and akin to it, was the change in political opinions. Till 1832 Oxford was the stronghold of Toryism, as it had been for many years before the names Whig and Tory came into

fashion: in 1848 some of the resident members of the University were Liberals; ten or twelve years later most of them were Liberals—most at least of those who were taking an active part in its teaching and administration. Party feeling at that time ran high in Oxford. It is not now extinct, but there is no longer need to consider carefully whom to ask to meet whom at dinner. The battles over the University Commission of 1854, over Mr. Jowett's stipend, and over the proposal to abolish tests, had inflamed the feelings of the combatants, clergy and laity alike: language was used about opponents, political and academical, which was often silly and discreditable. The present writer was surprised to find, when he came to frequent college common-rooms, that the senior members of the University were more given than undergraduates to the sins of the tongue which are forbidden in 'My duty towards my neighbour'. Much allowance must be made for strength of feeling and strength of language in a small community of men thoroughly in earnest about important questions, brought into very close quarters with each other, and unaccustomed to the 'give and take' which can be learnt only on public platforms, or at the Bar, or in the House of Commons. But it must be confessed that the humanities had not softened manners in

Oxford forty years ago. They were softened only by the abolition of tests, which few nowadays would deny to have been beneficial as well as inevitable. There has been a great improvement in Oxford manners and language since then—we may think things about each other but we do not always say them, and when we do say them, it is with more disguised acerbity.

The question of University degrees for women came much later, for the most ardent reformer had at first enough on his hands to give him full employment, and this reform seemed better reserved for years, perhaps centuries, to come. The academical suffragettes are less violent than the suffragettes who persecute Mr. Asquith—no Oxford ladies have been sent to prison for rabbling Heads of Houses, nor have the proctors been molested in the streets. Wiser and more dangerous methods than the use of physical force have been employed—the arts of logic and persuasion. The first step had been taken, the thin end of the wedge had been inserted, when women were admitted to the college lectures, and by inevitable consequence to University examinations. In them they gained honours as well as ‘passes’—why should they be refused the degree which is the reward of these qualifications in the case of men? Women by themselves are formid-

able: when they have logic, or the appearance of it, on their side, they are irresistible.

*Ξυνώμοσαν γάρ, ὅντες ἔχθιστοι τὸ πρίν,  
πῦρ καὶ θάλασσα*

in that great struggle: women are the fire, reason is the water. Of their opponents, some thought vaguely that women are not men—others, that a share, no small one, of the scholarships, colleges, and of the government of the University, must follow the concession of degrees—that co-education would, if complete, entail complications and inconveniences—that Oxford would be more than changed, and quite another Oxford would take its place, of a character unknown, impossible to predict, even to conjecture. Some of the weaker-kneed Friends of Women feared the prospect of becoming the Girondists of this revolution, and suffering the fate of all Girondists, of being carried, metaphorically, on a tumbril to the Martyrs' Memorial amidst shrieks and execrations, because they had raised a storm and endeavoured to control it. Some colleges, one in particular, in which the writer has a special interest, had been, it was rumoured, marked by the women for their own as specially fitted for the realization of the charming dream of the Princess, which, it was presumed, would involve the expulsion of the

present inmates. The result of these objections, some of them based on the selfishness of man, others difficult to state frankly without offence, was that the proposal to give degrees to women was rejected by an overwhelming majority after a formal debate in a large Congregation twelve years ago. The controversy is not closed, for the Chancellor of the University announced that 'in his scheme of reform for Oxford he is going to propose that degrees shall be open to women on exactly the same basis as to men'.<sup>1</sup> The questions which will be raised in the discussion of any scheme of reform are more numerous and less simple than the enigmas which the Commissioners of 1854 and 1881 tried to unriddle: they had to deal only, or mainly, with gross abuses and to remove restrictions obviously harmful: the work of future reformers must be constructive. They will have to face problems which their predecessors knew not, or ignored, or attempted to solve in a way which left them more difficult than before: the nature and methods of a liberal education; the claims of natural science; the relations between colleges and the University, and between the Professorial and Tutorial systems; a new definition of the local limits of residence which reasonably qualify for membership of Congregation, for

<sup>1</sup> *The Times* of October 24, 1908.

the present limits have come to be absurd ; a new definition perhaps also of other qualifications for membership of what is, in the first instance, the legislative body in the University ; to these problems for reformers must be added the admission of women to degrees, and of working-men into the University. Who is sufficient for these things ?

All reforms—religious, political, social, and, not least, academical—must come not from without, but from within, if they are to be real and permanent. A Commission of able persons, chosen with more regard to political considerations than to knowledge, intimate and personal, of our needs and problems, ought not to be let loose on the University unless and until it has been convicted of unwillingness or impotence to reform itself. Even the sharpest of chisels in the hand of the most skilful of carpenters is not the best instrument for mending a watch.

But what of the undergraduate ? Oxford to most people means him and nothing else, for he is perpetually *en évidence*, and is incomparably the most interesting thing or person in the University. Hopeless as the task is, an effort must be made to describe him in next month's 'Maga'.

## THE OXFORD UNDERGRADUATE, PAST AND PRESENT

**T**HREE is, happily, in Oxford one element of comparative stability—‘The undergraduate is unchanging as Egypt, Revolutions and Commissions leave him as they find him, self-centred and serene, for he is beyond them and above them, though his teachers are chameleons and change colour with their surroundings.’

This description was written twelve years ago, and twelve years more of acquaintance with the undergraduate from new and varied points of view have confirmed the writer in his admiration and affection for that amazing creature—not that he is faultless; he is full of faults which make him lovable, ‘Custom cannot stale his infinite variety.’ Infinite though that variety is, he remains essentially the same—a young British human boy of many types, even of many nationalities, for he has a wonderful power of assimilating the youth of all English-speaking peoples, Orientals, and even young Frenchmen and Germans, to his standards and ideas without any conscious effort on his part. They sooner or later become dominated by the *esprit de corps* of their college, and the desire to

be effective members of it, ‘to do something for it’, as the saying is, in athletics or in the schools or in its social life; and the young strangers meet with encouraging and kindly treatment in the vast majority of cases, and from the best men.

Oxford has become a second Babel, in which many tongues are spoken. Forty or fifty years ago foreigners were rare in Oxford. In Balliol in the early sixties there was not one, and if there had been, few of us could have made ourselves intelligible to him in any language but our own, save in Latin, possibly in Greek, perhaps also in French of a deplorable kind, for we had received a good classical education. A young Englishman may not be better off for languages now than he was then, but he is at least aware that there are other customs and views of life than his own worth considering, and to be reckoned with if he is to maintain the place of his nation in the world. A Japanese, whose stature is insignificant, and whose cricket and football and rowing, if existent, seem beneath contempt, is now recognized to be a man of war. It is not extravagant to say that the career of ‘Ranji’, as he is affectionately called, has done much to make our youth, especially our undergraduates, realize that we have an Indian Empire, and that it may be difficult to hold against men ‘who can play a game like

that'. French and German heard in the 'High' suggest to the undergraduate with much vividness that there are great nations outside of this 'tight little island', and very near it. His father or grandfather was aware of the existence of other nations than his own, but his assent to that belief was what Newman calls 'notional'; the son's assent is 'real', vivid, and operative, now that at every turn he meets a concrete foreigner, no notional and vague abstraction.

In other ways his political horizon has been enlarged: there were ardent Liberals and Conservatives among the young men forty-five or fifty years ago, but they were comparatively few; the American Civil War—the Reform Bill of 1867—the Abolition of Tests, which was no mere University question—the fate of the Established Church in Ireland—the break-up of the Liberal Party in 1885 on the issue of Home Rule, or of a Union of Hearts—Majuba Hill—the fate of General Gordon—the Boer War—were great political events or questions presented to the country and to the undergraduate in the space of forty years or less, the most important forty years probably of English history. The undergraduates' latent political instincts were awakened, and Oxford is now as full of political clubs as was Paris in 1789. Henley and Lord's have ceased, even

among cricketers and oarsmen, to be the only subjects worth talking about. Socialism, or something very like it, had special attractions for young and generous minds among the Liberals. The improvement of the condition of the poor, especially in the slums of large cities, was the nearer and more definite aim of the young Conservatives and Churchmen. ‘Whitechapel’ and ‘Bethnal Green’—that is, mission houses established in these quarters—became known and filled by Conservatives and Liberals alike, for there was a happy unanimity among the young missionaries as to ends, if not as to methods, and both missions appealed to ‘enthusiasms’ of different kinds, equally powerful. Plenty of cold water and criticism was thrown on both movements by ‘judicious friends’, but the enthusiasts were wise enough to trust in themselves, and they have been justified.

In every college debating societies discuss the problems of the day with that mixture of frivolity and earnestness which Plato anticipates as the unsatisfactory result of dialectic, if freely permitted, in his ideal State, where ‘the young men having been allowed to taste the dear delight too early are always contradicting and refuting each other, and are like puppy dogs who delight to tear and pull at all who come near them, and valiantly and speedily get into a way of not be-

lieving anything that they had believed before'.<sup>1</sup> Oxford is like the Athens both of Plato and of St. Paul, but after all a young Englishman is not a Greek, and can both wrangle and believe.

The writer had the privilege a few months ago of hearing the members of his college addressed by Mr. H. G. Wells on Socialism. He stated his case with great earnestness and equal moderation, for he allowed a century for the realization of Utopia by persuasion and the gradual education of rich and poor. Later on in the evening the writer had an equal or greater privilege when, in one of the Ladies' Colleges, he heard Socialism discussed by young men less moderate and cautious than Mr. Wells. They, and apparently some of the young ladies who listened, had more than the courage of their opinions. A decade or two seemed sufficient for the happy and successful accomplishment of the great change, and Mr. Wells was ' heckled ' with youthful impetuosity. He went through the ordeal with great good-humour and dexterity, and the young men had not the best of it. It was an instructive evening, and gave one much to think of. The Christian Socialist is a particularly formidable person, for he combines the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove. The party in the

<sup>1</sup> Plato, *Republic*, 539 b.

Church of England to which he generally belongs has borrowed from the Church of Rome the art of guiding and using unorthodox enthusiasm, an art which Protestants have yet to learn—one which may be used with great efficiency in Oxford, where the Church of England still holds the field by virtue of long tradition and the atmosphere of the place, which the fiercest of advanced thinkers cannot escape any more than the air in which he lives and moves and breathes. Enthusiasm means vigorous life, and extravagance in youth is graceful and commendable: it is well to sow your wild oats early, and the crop in Oxford is plentiful, unfailing, and clears the ground for a better harvest. It must not be supposed that political interests alone attract the undergraduate: his admiration for an athlete is no less sincere than his admiration for a leader or obstructionist in any of the great movements; his tastes are catholic, and he is impressed by energy and successful achievement in any shape. But a 'Blue' is nearer to him and more approachable than great personages outside Oxford. Personal acquaintance is possible, and largely sought, with a member of the Eight or the Eleven or Fifteen of his own college; still more with any one who has played or rowed for the University: to be a member of 'Vincent's', the club where athletes

congregate, is a high distinction. Plato, to quote him once more, protests against the evil influence of 'the Public, the greatest of all Sophists'—the young man is the slave of public opinion—' He will have the notions of good and evil which the public in general have ; he will do as they do, and as they are such will he be.'<sup>1</sup> The British public, many schoolmasters, most fathers, some mothers, sisters without exception, journalists above all, conspire to 'corrupt' boys and undergraduates by extravagant praise of athleticism as an end in itself. Extravagance breeds extravagance, and some persons would gladly see 'the flannelled fools' banished from the University : such reformers ignore the use and merits of a sane athleticism, the moral and intellectual education which can be given in a 'scrum' or boat-race or a cricket-match. The Ethics of Athletics await and deserve rational treatment.

Let us turn to a change in the habits of undergraduates of which every one will approve. Any one who has read old-fashioned novels depicting life at Oxford, such as *Reginald Dalton*, or even *Verdant Green*, written many years later than Lockhart's story, knows that strict sobriety was not one of the virtues of undergraduates. Any one who has read Mr. Pyecroft's account of

<sup>1</sup> Plato, *Republic*, 492.

life in Oxford in the thirties knows more—that drunkenness was frequent, if not habitual, in the fast set: not the deadly habit of solitary drinking which was and is almost unknown, but the more venial error of silly and excitable boys whose fathers could remember the Regency, and were not very rigorous censors.

The Bishop of London's utterance, made not long ago in a sermon preached at St. Mary's, 'about a wave of drunkenness passing over the University', excited much comment and indignant protest. It is difficult to believe that he meant more—if he meant more he was misinformed—than that the behaviour of many undergraduates at bump suppers, or on going out of training, leaves something to be desired.

Against these regrettable, but not frequent, incidents must be set the fact that the consumption of wine is now trifling, and far less than it was fifty years ago when college and private wines were frequent and the ordinary form of entertainment. Their place has been taken by breakfasts of a very substantial kind, no unworthy rivals of the great Scottish breakfasts of old and even present days.

There are in Oxford 3,000 young men of every class, and they conform cheerfully to the regulations by which discipline is maintained, for they

understand their use and meaning. The political instinct of young Britishers is naturally strong, and is confirmed by the training which they receive at school. If 100 young Germans or young Frenchmen were brought together in a college under rules not vexatious but certainly demanding punctuality, regular hours, and a considerable abridgement of freedom 'to go as you please', that college would have a brief and stormy existence. Disturbances in Oxford are not unknown, and furnish materials for spicy paragraphs in newspapers, but they are not frequent. The writer has seen undergraduates of all sorts in two colleges, and under different aspects—as one of themselves long ago, later as tutor, dean, and proctor, as golfer and cricketer; and games, it must be remembered, are the best means of judging character, for in them all men show their real selves. He is glad to testify that the Oxford undergraduate is not what he is painted by novelists or writers for the press—sometimes as a rowdy aristocrat, sometimes as an aesthete, sometimes as a hero of the Guy Livingstone type, sometimes as a saint. He is not commonly any of these, but a wholesome and manly young fellow with the virtues and faults of youth, accessible to influence if kindly and wisely exercised, though sometimes *cereus in vitium flecti*.

He has a code of honour of his own not more deficient than many other codes, lax in some respects, in others rigid. He abhors ‘bad form’, which means to him meanness, snobbishness, excessive ‘side’, vulgarity of the pretentious kind, above all foul play. ‘Bad form’ he is too ready to chastise by the wild justice of a solemn rag, which itself is not far removed from bad form, and is apt to pass into a kind of lynching, like judicial proceedings of that sort elsewhere.

One other failing of the blameless undergraduate: his code is lax in the matter of dress—Mr. Gladstone, as we are told in Mr. Fletcher’s charming account of the great man’s sojourn at All Souls, when, for a time, he had retired from politics, was amazed and scandalized by the shorts and blazers in which the younger members of the University, *non indecoro pulvere sordidi*, display their athletic proportions. He told the Fellows of All Souls that in his day undergraduates were ‘dandies’, young ‘Beau Brummells’; no change in Oxford struck him more than this, or was more distasteful to that real Conservative. It was the only change which he himself had not helped to make in the place where he spent the happiest days of his declining life, and for a time fell or rose to the level of the ‘rising hope of the stern

and unbending Tories', who wrote 'Gladstone on Church and State'.

One of the most remarkable and wholesome changes in undergraduate life is the reduction of expenditure. To 'go a mucker' was even fifty years ago not an uncommon exploit. The phrase survives, but now means a serious scrape, or worse, of any kind; it used to mean specially reckless and absurd extravagance, ending in a burden of debt of which the culprit did not rid himself till after many years of tribulation, inflicted often not on himself only, but on sisters and brothers and parents, who had pinched themselves that Tom or Dick or Harry might go to Oxford and live like a 'gentleman'. It is only fair to say that these young gentlemen paid their debts in the end, most of them, as the writer knows from conversation with an eminent Oxford tradesman, now long departed, who was an authority on the subject. There were many Pendennises at both Universities more than half a century ago, like Thackeray's foolish Arthur. There are few now—the parents of the ruined spendthrifts were mostly clergymen and country gentlemen of moderate means, a class now relatively and absolutely poorer than they used to be. Necessity, and the good feeling and common sense which are now prevailing, save in pestilent quarters, in

this country and in Oxford the reflection of it, as to the meanness of meanly admiring mean things, and of worshipping and imitating unworthy persons of rank and wealth, have led to the practice of economy and self-denial by many undergraduates in every college. In any well-managed college, and few, if any, colleges are not well managed in respect of internal economy, a youth if he is sensible and careful can live with reasonable comfort and a reasonable share in college life, social and athletic, for a sum varying from £110 to £120 a year—i. e. the academical year of six months. This estimate of course includes only the expenses incurred at Oxford for college and University charges—what an undergraduate spends on clothes, journeys, small personal outlays, and in his vacations, depends on himself. Figures of this kind are necessarily indefinite, but it is more than probable that the average undergraduate, and he is not the foolish prodigal son depicted in sensational journalism, now spends £3 instead of the £4 which he used to spend forty or fifty years ago. Some heroes in every college emulate the self-denial of their brethren in the Scottish Universities, and under more trying conditions, for in Oxford you cannot live in a lonely garret, as you please, feasting on a barrel of oatmeal and a cask of herrings, as some Scottish

students do, or used to do, men to whom one would speak with one's hat off, as Dr. Arnold used to say he would like to do when addressing some of his boys at Rugby. It is irritating to hear some foolish persons lament that new Oxford is not what old Oxford was, a place where every man was a 'gentleman'—i. e. a member of the 'upper classes', a Utopia, without the merit of being desirable, never realized in Oxford. Who would now wish or dare to define that 'grand old name' in a way which would exclude any one who is modest, courteous, self-denying, and faithful to duty? We had best adopt St. Paul's definition of the name implied in his description of 'charity'.

One of the most interesting of University problems is how to satisfy, with due regard to possibilities and to their own interests, the claims of 'working-men' to an Oxford education. That sombre and pitiless book, *Jude the Obscure*, makes us understand the difficulties which, not a clever boy in a county school, for the ladder has been made for him, but a working-man, must surmount if he is to make his way into Oxford. The writer will not here attempt to discuss this thorny question further than to say that while money may be forthcoming for the Oxford education of a working-man, he must provide the time. Can

he, unless he be a man of exceptional ability, not merely of exceptional ambition, spare with advantage to himself two or three years of his life, and return to the factory or workshop contented and fit for his work? The knowledge, or the degree which he may have acquired, will not necessarily help him to earn his living: it would seem that if a working-man comes to Oxford he must cease for good and all to be a working-man. Perhaps it will be found better that Oxford should go to the home of the working-man, than that the working-man should come to Oxford; but the question is one which demands and is receiving careful consideration. These words were written before the publication of the report of a committee consisting of seven representatives of the University and seven representatives of the working classes. The report deals with the doubts and difficulties felt even by those who sympathize with the desire of working-men to be in touch with Oxford: it is open to criticism of details, like all reports, but it will repay perusal, for it is careful and exhaustive, and gives rise to many reflections.<sup>1</sup> The extreme reformers in Oxford are not infallible any more than their critics, but in this matter they have ‘got hold of the right end of the stick’, and will be supported, when the time comes and the

<sup>1</sup> See *The Times* of December 5, 1908.

mists clear, by many who cannot agree with them on other points—on one especially; the ‘Oxford Tutors’, or some of them, have been understood to advocate a change compared with which other reforms sink into insignificance. It is difficult to ascertain how far they seriously propose or hope to banish from Oxford a person called by many opprobrious names—‘the idle rich’, the man ‘who comes to Oxford only as a school for manners’, the ‘athlete’, the ‘Passman’, for this term sums up all his odious qualities.

Much was written about many Oxford questions, and among them about the Passman, in *The Times*, the *Daily Telegraph*, and the *Westminster Gazette*, last June and July. The controversy began with a series of articles in *The Times* on ‘Oxford and the Nation’, written by ‘some Oxford Tutors’, in the spring and summer of 1907—very vigorous and interesting articles, but open to criticism. The criticism was made a year later in a letter, equally vigorous and interesting, by ‘A Graduate’, which appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* of June 30, 1908. One of the ‘Oxford Tutors’ replied to him in the *Daily Telegraph* of July 9. A perusal of these letters, part of a huge mass of literature, will give any one interested in a question hardly less important than the questions of Old Age Pensions or of the

Licensing of Public-houses considerable knowledge of the issues involved, which are intricate enough. We are concerned here only with the Passman and the college system, of which he may be said to be a part, and on which his continued existence will depend. One of the writers of '*Oxford and the Nation*' replying to '*A Graduate*' disclaims any hostility to the collegiate system, 'admirably', he says, 'defined' by his opponent 'as men living, eating, playing, and even quarrelling together'—a definition probably not offered as complete. It may be assumed, therefore, that colleges, as hotels at least, will long endure, unless blown up by some '*Oxford Tutors*' of the future. As to the Passman there is some obscurity; it is not clear what is to become of him. There seems to be some hope for him after all; it is recognized that he cannot be ended, but that he may possibly be mended, and his most determined enemies seem ready to accept this rational solution of the problem. The Editor of the *Westminster Gazette*, who seems to be in sympathy with, and to understand the views of the '*Oxford Tutors*', denies 'that there is any desire to exclude the Passman from the Universities. What is wanted is that he should come with the grounding of a rational and efficient education which should be carried on through his Univer-

sity career.' These are the words of truth and soberness, and must express the real wishes of the 'Oxford Tutors' and their friends, notwithstanding occasional violence of language about the Passman. The words Passmen and Classmen have been the causes of much mischief and misunderstanding: they are not real kinds in nature separated from each other by an unfathomable chasm—they shade and pass into each other by imperceptible gradations. Many undergraduates are Passmen for part of their career—Classmen for the rest of it when they read for some Final Honour School: comparatively few are Passmen to the end. Among 3,000 young men there are some idlers and 'wasters', but the percentage is small, and does not warrant wholesale massacre. Nor are the Passmen the only idle and extravagant members of the University. Many who seek no distinction in the schools receive a fair education, though they might receive a better if the Pass schools were improved and the standard raised.

To educate Passmen, not to expel them, is one of the duties of a great national University. Education means something more than a literary or scientific training; there is an education, political and social in the best sense, though difficult to define, which is good for all young Britishers, whether they be rich or poor, clever

or dolts, industrious or idle, for they educate each other. Even the idler can be coerced, and ought to be coerced by discipline, and when reformed he gives reason for much rejoicing, and is an edifying example. Our practical nation will not tolerate a University inhabited only by professors, researchers, and clever boys—all admirable persons, but it takes more than them to make a world, to make the Oxford which we know, and which excites the envy as well as the criticism of nations superior to us in learning, science, and research. Abolish the Passman—abolish the Gulf Stream—both are beneficent and ordained by nature. It is significant that while some reformers on this side of the water ignore or underestimate the value of the collegiate system, their wiser brethren on the other side are countenancing, it may be said promoting, the introduction of the only substitute for that system possible in American Universities. A writer in *The Times* of August gives an interesting account of the Fraternities in the young men's Universities, the object of which is to promote something like college life: nor do their sisters lag behind, for they have formed for the same purpose Sisterhoods, called by the charming though not classical name—Sororities.

It is probable that movements of this kind will

have the sympathy of the numerous American Rhodes scholars who return to their country, all of them, I believe, with happy experiences of college life in Oxford. Mr. Rhodes's bequest was the realization of an idea, which few will deny to be imperial in the largest and noblest meaning of the term. Whatever may have been the errors of that great man, the Rhodes foundation will atone for them in the judgement of all but vindictive partisans. He wished to bind together by knowledge of each other and consequent goodwill not merely the subjects of the British Empire but Americans of the United States and Germans. It is possible that had he lived he would have sought Rhodes scholars in even a larger area, but he did what he could in the time allowed him. There are in Oxford 180 Rhodes scholars—by the end of this century 3,000 of them will have passed through Oxford, educated men and effective in every department of life, carrying with them kindly memories and the indefinable influences of the place. Surely Rhodes will prove himself a peacemaker, masterful and Napoleonic though he was.

The Rhodes scholars come from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa, Bermuda, Jamaica, Newfoundland, the United States, and Germany. The selection is made in the countries

from which they come, on the grounds of intellectual and moral excellence, with much regard to physical and athletic prowess—for in English-speaking communities at least, the last kind of *ἀρετή* is valued as highly as it was by the Greeks, who were not deficient in intellectual gifts. The Rhodes scholars have made their mark and held their own in the schools and in athletics. They have been cordially received by the young Oxonians, who have something to teach them and learn from them, both in views of life and in vocabulary. It was feared by some of the authorities that the new-comers might be less amenable to discipline than might be desired—there was no need for fear: they conform cheerfully to rules which, for them, have the charm both of novelty and old-world quaintness: they are happy in Oxford, and sorry to leave it, as the writer knows from frequent testimony: Rhodes's purpose is on its way to complete achievement.

But it is impossible adequately to describe the undergraduate: like the person of Cleopatra, he 'beggars all description'.

## A HIGHLAND SCHOOL SIXTY YEARS SINCE

BY tradition my knowledge of Glenalmond goes back to 1847—‘Sixty years since’, as Sir Walter might have said. Two brothers of mine, older than I, were in that little company of fourteen boys who on May 4, 1847, drove from Perth to Glenalmond, the first settlers in what then was a region as desolate as Labrador. They were shy of each other at first, and ceremonious, even to the extent of calling a little lord, one of the company, by his title. Next day they called him Spooney, a name which implied no contempt or even disparagement, but friendliness, as almost all nicknames do. Jupiter and Juno, Rufus and Pudding, Paddy and Fatty were of the party, I think, but only the Warden could correct me if I am wrong. The owners of these names were certainly at Glenalmond in the very earliest years of its existence as a school. From the beginning it was a very happy place: how could it have been anything else?—how can it ever be? The river, the hills, the moors—the liberty, the variety of amusements, the freedom from the stern

discipline of cricket and football, also from any very arduous mental fatigue—made it a boy's paradise, happier, I believe, even than the famous school Winchester, of which it was a colony planted in the north—a *propugnaculum ecclesiae* sent there by Gladstone and Mr. Hope Scott—a *propugnaculum* also of the English public school system.

The colonists—like the Trojans of the Aeneid—carried with them names and traditions, of which I can recollect only Olivers Battery—standing up—Long-half and Short-half—repetition, sweat, &c.

The leader of the colony was Charles Wordsworth. He was a great scholar, a fine and stately gentleman; he had played cricket and rowed for his university, against Cambridge, and was an admirable skater. Such a man was naturally regarded by the boys with much pride, and even greater awe, for he was perhaps too dignified and stern—hence he was called ‘Grumphy’, from a habit which he had of coughing slightly before admonishing or punishing.

The writer well remembers being taken on a winter evening in 1853 by one of his brothers to the Warden's study to be examined in elementary Greek grammar; how he—not the Warden—nearly ‘dropped down dead’, as Sidney Smith

recommends curates to do in their first interview with a bishop. My diffidence, certainly not my knowledge, must have helped me, for I passed, and was immediately taken to the manciple's room to be measured for a gown. Gowns were worn by the boys from 1847 to 1854, when Dr. Hannah abolished a garment which had few advantages, and those not of the kind contemplated or desired by the inventor: they were ugly and heavy, but they were admirable receptacles for game-birds' eggs and other unlawful things; pistols sometimes, though not often, for the possession of pistols was a capital offence. The gowns were warm, at any rate, and could be tucked up round your waist. Probably they were designed, like the convict's dress at Dartmoor, for purposes of identification—not that we were criminals, though unquestionably poachers—sportsmen—naturalists—some of us all these at once.

Dr. Wordsworth brought with him several young Winchester and Oxford men as masters. Mr. Witherby ('Old John') is always affectionately remembered by O. G.'s who were at the school between '47 and '70. He is still alive, an old man, who knows more than anybody else about the early history of the school. He was much beloved, for he was very kindly and good-natured, perhaps too much so, to the boys in his

class (we did not use the word form); being a good scholar, he was impatient of slow and blundering attempts to translate Virgil, and any sensible boy soon learnt how to give Old John his head, and let *him* translate.

Mr. C. B. Mount, who is still alive, and lives in Oxford, a friend and neighbour of the writer, was not to be out-manœuvred in this way, and you had either to know your work fairly well or to write out ‘lines’—50 or 100 from ‘As in praesenti’—as an ‘imposition’. Punishments of this kind were unwise and mischievous—they were everything that punishments ought not to be; they were not deterrent, for ingenious and fascinatingly dangerous expedients, which may still be known at Glenalmond, and which I will neither reveal nor defend, considerably abridged the labour of writing out the amount required. Nor did a ‘pos’ meet another object or end of punishment. It did not reform or improve the criminal, either morally or intellectually. You learnt nothing by writing out irregular perfects of very irregular verbs, a process which confirmed you in your hatred of grammatical anomalies, and even of the classical languages, supposed to be taught in this way. I have no doubt that now the punishments at Glenalmond deter and amend, and are even welcomed as rational and wholesome.

Both Mr. Witherby and Mr. Mount were Wykehamists, and, if I may be allowed to say it, admirably represented the Winchester traditions.

Nor can I omit the name of ‘Cockey Taylor’, who looked after our music and the singing in chapel: he was one of the quaintest of men, very shrewd and grimly humorous, a good cricketer of the most exasperating kind, with a defence like a stone wall, and a useful wicket-keeper and counsellor generally.

The Bishop of Bristol was our cricket hero. He came to us from Cambridge in 1857. He may perhaps read these reminiscences, so I must be careful. For a man who had been taught to bat by Julius Caesar (by the small boys vaguely identified with a Roman general of that name), and had learnt from that great cricketer how to hit to square-leg, we could feel nothing but reverence and admiration. His singularly handsome face and figure; his strength of character tempered by kindness—boys are extraordinarily good judges of masters, and like both strength and kindness—made him a hero. If he ever reads this he will forgive me this impertinence of praise.

Last, but not least, among the masters of my time came Bishop Barry, who was sub-warden till 1854. Here again I must be careful, and not

speak the whole truth about him. He came from Cambridge, a very high wrangler and high classic—a double-barrelled man of remarkable distinction. Never shall I forget his appearance of patient dignity as he taught us Euclid on a black-board, and his frequent use of the words ‘ So far so good ’—a phrase which seemed to contain, to me at least, something of irony, and a sinister meaning, for the ‘ so far ’ was generally the end of one’s tether. Dr. Barry left when Wordsworth left. Both of these eminent men were inevitably called away to work not necessarily higher than, but different from, work in a school of sixty or seventy boys. Its smallness was the defect of Glenalmond ; there was then no effective competition or vigorous intellectual life, the condition of which is one hundred boys at least.

Dr. Hannah, commonly called Gru, either a Greek interjection or a variant of Grumphy, became warden in September 1854. He was a man in many ways different from his predecessor : a man of affairs rather than a scholar in the purely classical sense—a learned Aristotelian and logician, not a master of Latin prose nor of Greek Iambics ; an intimate friend of Sir William Hamilton, with whom, when Rector of Edinburgh Academy, he used to have vigorous discussions of philosophical questions. He was not

a good teacher of boys save in one point—viz. that he got some work out of the clever ones, and made them think a little. He was meant by nature to be a university professor, and his heart was in Oxford. But he was a good organizer, as he showed himself to be in later years when he became vicar of Brighton ; he cut down expenses, and improved the financial position of the school and its discipline, and increased its numbers in spite of a disastrous outbreak of scarlet fever which checked its growth for a time. Though no ‘sportsman’ himself, he won the hearts of many by his almost feverish interest in our cricket matches with the Edinburgh Academy. I remember being accosted by him when I was going to the wicket at a critical moment of the match in which, by the aid of the Bishop of Bristol, we defeated the Academy. I was nervous, but not as nervous as was Dr. Hannah when he said, ‘For Heaven’s sake play steady !’ That is the way to win boys’ hearts, far more effective than any sermon, at least of the high philosophical kind which he used to preach to us. His letter to Mr. Gladstone, the answer to which showed unsoundness in that statesman’s mind on the question of the Church of Ireland, was a political event, for it forced Gladstone’s hand. Curiously enough, the letter was rewarded by him with the

vicarage of Brighton. He would be a cynic who should say that Dr. Hannah was worth silencing.<sup>1</sup>

All the authorities, from Wordsworth to Hannah—the last by his keen interest at least—took part in the school games. Wordsworth, a Bishop when I became a Glenalmond boy, had no time for cricket; for the six previous years he had played it frequently and taught his boys how it ought to be played. I saw him skate, and he seemed to me a supernatural being. The masters joined us in cricket, football, old-fashioned hockey, and fives, and as they played well, some of them at least, all of them vigorously, they acquired fame and influence. The justifiable and inevitable reaction against extravagant athleticism which is now approaching will not, we may hope, make us forget that games are an education.

Glenalmond had to encounter many prejudices and misunderstandings. In the early days it was thought to be a nest of Papists, between whom and High Churchmen the distinction was, to the minds of many Scotchmen, too subtle to be worth considering, nor is it even now clear. It was said, and by some persons believed, that the Glenalmond boys played cricket in their surplices! This libel must have caused Dr. Wordsworth, a member of the first Oxford University eleven,

<sup>1</sup> See Gladstone's *Gleanings of Past Years*, vol. vii, p. 131.

more pain than any attack on his theological views, or any imputation of Tractarianism. He was a High Churchman of the old school, sometimes called 'High and Dry'. Indeed his life was made, if not miserable, yet burdensome and anxious, by frequent collisions with Tractarians among his clergy. The volume of *Sermons preached at Glenalmond* faithfully represents the Glenalmond teaching of fifty or sixty years ago—'a sound rule of faith, and a sober standard of feeling in matters of practical religion'. Mr. Leach, in his *History of Winchester* (p. 438 *et seq.*), speaking of the tide of depression which set in at Winchester in 1846 and flowed for ten years, writes as follows: 'Another cause that no doubt tended in the downward direction was the reputation of Dr. Moberly and the second master, Charles Wordsworth, of being extreme High Churchmen. It was unfortunate for Winchester that Radley was started by a Wykehamist, William Sewell, on the most extreme High Church lines, and that Charles Wordsworth was selected as the first Warden of Glenalmond. From all these causes the school went down and down till in 1856 it reached the nadir of sixty-eight Commoners.' Gladstone had selected Wordsworth, his former tutor at Christ Church, for whose scholarship and character he had the highest admiration, but not because of

‘extreme’ High-Churchmanship. ‘Incedo per ignes suppositos cineri doloso’: Glenalmond, like Radley in England and St. Columba’s in Ireland, was unquestionably founded in the interests of what may be called the Moderate High Church party, as distinguished from those who followed, or all but followed, Newman to the Church of Rome. The founder of Glenalmond strongly sympathized with the Scotch Episcopalians. Gladstone was no Jacobite, for he was already perhaps a Liberal, but he was endowed with an extraordinary faculty of holding diametrically opposite opinions with undisturbed conviction that both were true; he was no metaphysician, but he rivalled Hegel in the power of ‘harmonizing contradictions’. He loved ‘the suffering and Episcopal Church of Scotland’, of which Mr. Pleydell was a member, for its fidelity to a lost cause, its patience and vitality under the penal laws, not long before his birth repealed, and for its untainted orthodoxy. He desired that Scotland should have a public school like his own Eton, though not only for the sons of wealthy men, but for the sons of poor gentlemen, especially the clergy, indeed for boys from every class and church, even for unhappy little Presbyterians who might be brought into the true fold, to the great benefit of Scotland, which was both ecclesiastically

and socially divided against itself. In 1840 he wrote to Manning, ‘Hope and I have been talking and writing upon a scheme for raising money to found in Scotland a College akin in structure to the Romish Seminaries in England ; that is to say, partly for training the clergy, partly for affording an education to the children of the gentry and others who now go chiefly to Presbyterian schools, or are tended at home by Presbyterian tutors. In the kirk, toil and trouble, double, double, the fires burn and cauldrons bubble : and though I am not sanguine as to any very speedy or extensive resumption by the Church of her spiritual rights, she may have a great part to play. At present she is weakly manned, and this is the way I think to strengthen her crew.’ In the autumn of 1842 Hope and the two Gladstones made what they found an agreeable tour, examining the various localities for a site : finally, after much consideration of Dunblane, they decided on the high ground overhanging a ‘mountain stream ten miles from Perth, at the very gate of the Highlands’.<sup>1</sup>

The Scotch are a peculiar people, and difficult to comprehend, as will be found by other statesmen than Gladstone, in the times which are to come. A Scotchman gains much, it is said, by

<sup>1</sup> See chapter vii of Morley’s *Life of Gladstone*, pp. 230, 231, vol. i.

taking ‘the high road to England’, but he loses something if he becomes thoroughly Anglicized —viz. the power to remain in touch with his countrymen in the north. Gladstone was a Scotchman, like many very great men, but he had the misfortune to be born and bred in England: therefore he miscalculated the strength of that Presbyterianism which is natural to the mass of the Scottish people, and will for ever prevent ‘the resumption by the Church of her spiritual rights’. A Scotch Episcopalian born and bred, and loyal to his Church, is here merely stating what he believes to be a fact: he recognizes that while Episcopalianism appeals to one side of his countrymen’s very complex character, a *perfervidum ingenium* which calculates no consequences, Presbyterianism appeals to the other side of it, that love of freedom, of independence, of individualism, and that common sense which, south of the Tweed, are supposed to constitute and explain satisfactorily the Scottish character.

Glenalmond was opened only four years after the Disruption. ‘The toil and trouble, double, double,’ had ended in the noble but disastrous sacrifice made by the Free Churchmen: noble, because it meant, for all they knew to the contrary, loss of position, churches, income, and practical destitution; disastrous, for it broke up

finally and completely the unity, or semi-unity, if there be such a word, of Presbyterianism, the national religion. Stanley's epigram to the effect that none but Scotchmen would have made the sacrifice, and none but Scotchmen would have made it for such a trifle, is witty and double-edged, but it is not true. It was no 'trifle' about which the Free Churchmen 'went out'. The question was not merely a legal one: behind it or underneath it were greater issues than could be decided by any court of law—the relation between Church and State, which is a problem to be solved by the national will; the right of congregations to choose, or have a voice in choosing, their ministers; the 'Headship of Christ'. The Free Churchmen may have been wrong, but they were not quarrelling about trifles. The risings of '15 and '45, and the Disruption, are proofs that neither of the two great sections of the Scottish people have a monopoly of enthusiasm, self-sacrifice, Quixotism, call it what you will.

Presbyterians, all of them sensitive, exasperated by the long struggle, Free Churchmen and adherents to the Auld Kirk alike, saw in the foundation of Glenalmond an insidious attempt to propagate Episcopacy, which was distasteful to both, and to introduce, as the most potent means of doing so, a new and English system of education,

that given by public boarding-schools in place of the system to which they were accustomed and which had produced admirable results. Glenalmond was taken to be 'a college akin in structure to the Roman Seminaries in England', not in structure only, but in spirit and teaching. Can we wonder that the new school was not enthusiastically welcomed in the land of Knox, nor by the most essentially conservative, and (may a Scotchman say it?) the most 'easily provoked', of all the nations upon earth?

To come to less dangerous topics. A day at Glenalmond in the 'fifties' was somewhat of a hardening process, like a day at Winchester—the old Winchester; in some respects more severe, for the Glenalmond climate in winter is, though healthy, not a warm one. I have vivid memories of 1854–1855. We did not undergo privations as cruel as those which our troops were suffering in the Crimea: we were not starved, nor did any of us die from fatigue, nor want of shelter, nor disease. But in that terrible winter we slept in rooms supposed to be warmed by a system of hot air, evil-smelling and inefficient; the water in our jugs was often frozen into a solid mass, for the temperature was frequently near zero. We had to rise at 6.30 and be in schoolroom by seven, our washing often deferred. Our toilette, such

as it was, had to be made *sub luce maligna* of little oil-lamps, easily upset, hot to the touch, and very dangerous. Why the College was not burnt to the ground is to me incomprehensible. The hour from seven to eight was spent by hungry and shivering boys in learning and saying repetition. No Society for the Protection of Children then existed: if it had existed it would have found a 'field of work' at Glenalmond. We breakfasted at eight on weak tea or weak coffee and bread and butter, all save those fortunate boys who had brought from home large hampers, and had made them last; or whose pocket-money was liberal enough to provide for more than a few weeks' surreptitious luxuries. At 1 p.m. we dined on 'the simple fare provided by the College', an unfortunate phrase used in an address given by —, a phrase which excited protest and derision, for boys have much sense of humour. It must be confessed that our dinners were good and satisfying, but one hearty meal a day is not enough for growing boys. Tea at six was like our breakfast. A loyal Glenalmondonian would be sorry if it were thought that he wished to describe his old school as a kind of Dotheboys Hall, where the boys were starved—he would rather describe it as too Spartan; but the Spartan discipline produced fine boys and men, and Glenalmond has

produced the same—good soldiers and many of them, good colonists and administrators, despite its meagre teas and breakfasts.

One more criticism and my ungracious task of fault-finding will be finished. Our hours of study, so called, were too long ; most of the boys were supposed to spend nine or ten hours a day in preparing work and doing it in class. The work to be prepared was scanty, and our standard of preparation was not high. Hence there was ample time for perusing in school hours what we considered the productions of the best authors, far superior to Ovid or Horace or Xenophon or Thucydides, who could not write like Fenimore Cooper or Marryat or Mayne Reid or Walter Scott. No reading could have been better for us, but when done in school hours, though none the less attractive, for stolen hours are sweet, it did not improve our moral tone, and tended to bring classical learning into contempt. We had only one half-holiday in the week, on the blessed Saturday. On Saints' Days there was a whole holiday from eleven to six, to which we looked forward eagerly, not entirely as strict Churchmen.

But at Glenalmond boys were, and are now, the happiest schoolboys in the United Kingdom, for they had, and have, all the materials for happiness. Cricket and football were not ‘organized ’

into the rigid system which has made them not games or play, but business of a very laborious and often irksome kind. Small boys were not compelled to spend their play hours in fielding while the great cricketers practised ; nor in learning football if they did not like it. Nor was a ‘ big fellow ’, with no aptitude or taste for cricket and football, unpopular and condemned by public opinion if he did not play them, but fished, or ‘ collected ’ birds or beasts or plants. Not that there was any lack of patriotism or public spirit in the school. Any boy who could be made useful in games and whose services were needed would have sacrificed his hobby if required to do so ; but there was not at Glenalmond that rigorous conscription of reluctant ‘ duffers ’, who may at the best possibly be trained into third-rate athletes, which prevails in many public schools nowadays, and embitters the life of many boys who dare not complain, and, if they did, would meet with little sympathy.

The charm of life at Glenalmond was its ‘ infinite variety ’. There was, of course, plenty of skating ; in the Crimean winter the river was frozen from November till the middle of April, and skating was possible from the falls of Buchanty to Logie-Almond—skating of a rough kind, often over blocks of ice where the broken

water was frozen into fantastic shapes, such as one sees in pictures of the arctic regions, though on a smaller scale. A day on Paton's pond was a thing to be remembered ; several whole holidays were given that winter, for the masters were as fond of skating as were the boys. Hockey on the ice is not the highest kind of skating, but it is the most delightful, and it was played with great vigour on the long expanse of Paton's pond.

Fishing was another of our delights. The Almond trout were small, running not more than five to the pound ; but they rose freely, and in the hour and a half before dinner the best fishermen used on good days to catch two dozen of them. St. Mark's day, and St. Philip and St. James's day I remember as among the happiest days of my life. The senior boys were given 'leave out of dinner', and had seven hours of rapturous freedom. Two of them, or nearly two, were spent in running to the Narrow Glen, or Sma' Glen as it was sometimes called. It seems to me impossible that I, never much of a runner, could have done such feats, for five hours' wading and the two journeys made a very creditable performance. Equally happy were the days spent in 1858, my last year at Glenalmond, on Loch Freuchie, with four other boys—two of them now gone. We were allowed two days at Whitsuntide, and stayed at the little inn at Amulree, under

a promise, which we faithfully observed, to behaye ourselves, and resist the temptations of Athol brose, for which the inn had a sinister reputation. The Loch Freuchie trout in those days were small but very numerous. We caught, I think, amongst us more than forty dozen—no great feat, for a good breeze was blowing on both days, and the fish were very innocent. Pike were put into the loch a few years later, and when I fished it in 1868 the sport was very poor.

Bathing in the Deep Hole in summer—what a joy it was ! It can be hot in the Highlands in June, far hotter than the Southrons imagine. So many boys bathed three times a day—at noon, in the afternoon, and in the evening—that the Warden had to interfere, for they were making themselves deaf. The small boys bathed at Rufus's, and sometimes in the Pool of Siloam. I wonder whether these names survive. Every one learned to swim, a branch of education of more practical value than some other branches thought to be more important. There were other pleasures which cannot be defended—squirrel-hunting, or rather squirrel-stoning, a cruel sport, in which I am ashamed to have delighted. Nor was the plundering of game-birds' nests justifiable. It had the charm of the possibility of collision with the keepers, and of being pursued, but rarely captured, for hardy boys of fourteen or

fifteen are ‘faster on their legs’ than all but the youngest of keepers.

But the school was on the whole well-behaved and wholesome. I can remember few serious ‘rows’. Only one remains vivid in my memory —the plunder of the heronry at Logiealmond by four boys who got out of the college in the very early morning, and returned with eggs taken by somewhat dangerous climbing. They got out of college and into it by the burglarious device of neatly filing the iron bars of a back window, so that they could be removed and replaced at will. In this they displayed, as the sub-warden said, ‘an ingenuity worthy of a professional thief’, a phrase which gave much pleasure to the criminals, indeed to all of us, for it was a real compliment. They, unfortunately, in their hurry replaced the bars carelessly, which negligence led to their detection and a sound flogging. Flogging was comparatively rare at Glenalmond. Caning was the ordinary method, the other being reserved for serious offences.

Fights were few, which I have always thought curious, for the boys were high-spirited and courageous, as the Glenalmond military record proves. But when a fight did occur it was a good one, carefully arranged and fought to a finish; as was fought a curious combat between an un-

popular and somewhat tyrannical prefect, challenged and attacked at once by two boys of moderate size and great activity. I have never seen a bull-fight, but I cannot imagine it being more deliciously exciting than was this contest in the big schoolroom after tea and in the presence of the whole school. The little ones were getting the worst of it when the prefects wisely interfered. I can see that battle with my mind's eye now, though it took place fifty-five years ago.

Fain would the writer be a Glenalmond boy again, and he envies those who are now at that happy school : it was a happy school fifty years ago ; it must be still happier now, for the boys are better fed and better warmed than they were in the 'fifties'—I was going to add 'better taught', as indeed they are, but I fear that kind of improvement is not so directly conducive to happiness (save perhaps of the very highest kind) as comfort and good, I do not mean luxurious, feeding.

I should be glad if these dim and meagre reminiscences gave pleasure to the present generation of Glenalmond boys, and to their predecessors who are to be found in every quarter of the globe and in every calling ; some of them no doubt unlucky, some successful ; all of them, I am sure, loyal to a school which has a singular power of winning the affection of its sons.









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